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Mags

Poetry

A Soul Available

By Dean Pajevic

November 2003 – July-August 2008



"Everybody tells you kids are going to change your life. 'Yeah, sure. Whatever,' you say. Then they come along. And your life changes."

"I look at her big, three-year-old eyes and I don't want to sit the fence anymore. I want her to grow up in a world where nature and people are not lashed to the mast of that sinking ship called History. So I write. It's like jamming a crowbar into my heart and soul, prying back the stinking, rotten planks and feeling as much joy and life as I can stand. And sharing it."

Dean writes the column Mags for Mental Contagion.

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November 2003

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Sky's grey seeps like cloaked monks

Sky's grey seeps like cloaked monks
into the palms of mothers who pray
for a little jazz hidden in the sofa,
a reprieve from the unfinished picture album

Indian chiefs stacked in museums
root, stalk and flower burned
our chimp faces grow weary
to the shrilling harpsichord

hug the soldier to the tomb
make the farmer hate the dirt
his tears blur the stars
she throws her heart at the moon

January 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Trees. They get it. We should take a hint.

Winter trees sparkle silver
sun warms brown grass to green
pines gnarled into broken rock
ancient volcanoes split and shatter
all at an inchworms pace.

Not a straight line in sight --
except the concrete blockhouse
water pumping station,
except the denuded, wirewrapped
telephone pole,
except the raised welts in the sky
from the crisscrossing jets,

except me and my need to get
from where I was to where
I am going.

February 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Sometimes you just gotta wait it out.

The sun sets again,
grass turning blue,
old man walks his terrier,
girl jogs by wearing an orange headband.

My hands feel like two broken stones,
obelisks in ruins,
osiris cut apart, thrown
into the river, lost.

I pick up a pen.
I put it back down.
I leaf through an old National Geographic.
I try and nap.

The streetlights wink on,
my hands lay on my stomach.
I remember being a boy
making a robot hand
out of hinges, tin snips
gutters and string.

I wish I had that hand now
so I could hide behind it
like the wizard, fool
them all to worship.

A car drives by,
headlights pick out tree branches,
the chink of heavy metal guitar
sparks and roils the air.

My hand picks up a pen,
I wonder what happened
to my crude robot arm?
shrugging, I put pen to paper

and seek my scattered pieces.

March 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Mothers line the pier waiting

Mothers line the pier waiting
for our boat to row its rusted hulk
to harbor, to home

then the cleft tongue will break
shitting out the words it hates --
I'm sorry, I did wrong

I made it happen
creasing my palm
cheering the fist

now only the wind keens for the souls
who fill the trees with apples every spring

April 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Those I have loved

Those I have loved
their eyes and laughs
their pluckishness
their spring and step

their fucking language
their hands flung up
to dance this dance
their hearts flung out
to drink and spill
the words of love --
I do, I will.

You are years of leaves
that never dried, that never fell
My tree is heavy, filled
with thee.

I wait for my first real fall
and bless each leaf
that will drop
and let me live.

My tears are bitter
but if I learned one thing
from all you do,

seek love in giving now --
not in you.

May 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Fish

The moonlight waxes and drips
spurting on granite and Douglas fir
and the fish, a salmon
or perhaps a trout
moils and minces brilliant and cold.

The fish opens the door for me
puts on my sixth grade polyester blue suit
remembers and kisses my old broken nose
throws away my polished stone triumphs
all my pedantic verbal pleasantries

The fish scours my dreams
for the unwritten words of the Kells,
my illuminated manuscript heart.
The fish is a monk with a bloody head
the fish is bad at shaving
as bad as he is great
at laying gold on vellum
at the grinding of ocher and cobalt
the seeping and soaking and tawning
all to a pure essence, an ink
that he dips a fin into
and scratches Latin curliqued:

"I am a lord,

not a man, not a road,
I swim where I like
eat from the morgue.

My fins are creaking
they rust all the night,
so now that you know me
here's a kiss and goodnight!"

Then he turned away
into the current, aflame
with ideas that blew from him
like old trash from the dump

to the deeper water
to the mosses and rocks
to nestle there and sleep
to recycle my junk.

June 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Choosing to walk my path.

1.

A vermined feather falls,
crashing to the ground,
as unwashed feet press down,
mash heart in mud and pull the trigger.

Tulip rises, blood red song to the sun --
stamp it down into the dirty snow!
stamp down the throat and hide,
the mewling cries, mewling cries.

Machine guns bark like steel wolves,
mothers disappear.
What faith could cleanse with tears,
revenge pollutes with silence.

Forgive. Get fucked!

Who fired the gun? Brother did.
Your hard hands, the bloody rope
ties me to you and you to him;
we bind her calloused hands.

2.

Gray hairs sprout in my armpits,
your memories curl and twist,
thick roots of a blood plant,
blooming in me like fingernails.

It is a flower of tingling hardness,
girded in tightened scrotum,
that stabs into the past,
to drown me, drown all.

But my heart will not be stilled.
With rasping breath and trembling hand
I weed my garden, rooting out
"Fuck you!" "Get even!" "Be strong!"

I will not be strong like father.
I will not be strong like trigger puller.

They are dead.
Dead, dead, dead.

July 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

Tick tock. Tick, tick, tock.

1.

Bicuspid intraterrestrials engage
fractious mesomorphs and implement
conversations extracting information to
gorge on greed --
to death.

Automating bicameral information for
sanctimonius slaving productions
winning wealth beyond --
any happiness.

2.

The snake charmer is a blind crone
stumbling through a field of wheat stubble,
picking nectarines from an empty apple tree,
pushing the killers face under the water,
the turds of the sheiks and presidents,
the wind slicing and dicing
fingers knots of machina pistola fire
ponies beaten behind the barn and shot.

The boat dragged to shore and the pilotless moon,
conspire to keep our mouths wrapped in rags and
our sleeping faces sweet whether or not
the buddha met a svelte bette noir,

the bodhisattvas raged all along the piers
and our candy colored nails drag the killers to the light.

Wind on the trees, moonlight on my teeth,
I rip this beef apart and spy the tunnel's end.

September 2004

A Spirit on a Speck of Dust Orbiting a Minor Sun on the Edge of the Milky Way

My Heart is a Great Crow

I didn't cry at your funeral
I didn't cry when you left me at fifteen
I didn't cry, just made jokes

I became a fat, dull hammer:
shoving burgers, beer and tequila
down my throat to forget -

Then a bird came down
into the silver pine, and hung out -
is that me?

my tears are swift wings
lifting me into now -
my heart is a great crow
I let fly when the fear freezes
when the moon doesn't come out
when memories return

the cawk and crack rings
me into now, into gasping
and blubbering and blowing
snot on my shoe

into flitting my wings
quick, flash and awake,

poised, focused, alive
to the air, above the crash of cars
and the man in the window
watching me through his tears
as I jump and soar out of his yard
and into the world.

October 2004

Where does the time go ... ?

Snippets

Let God sell his cars,
Jesus move the 20 unit condo building,
Mary and Joseph negotiate laddered bonds,
Paul analyze the books for improper revealing.

Let all of them hate, the poor and the stealing.

Uncovering my heart
is the slow unbinding
of a great Victorian corset --
lace upon lace,
stitch upon stitch,
brace after brace,
hitch after hitch.

What I had thought so exotic,
bound up baroque,
looks shriveled, uncooked.

Jumping junipers, jimmenny hrackets,
I found some cheese, some butter packets.
I failed to stop the knife, the gun,

I'm going to slather my bun,
then go up again to the buffet
and fill my plate. This pan is huge

but my hunger swallows all.
This lard will help me forget
the generals, the bombs, the facts true:
thousands died for Stupid Monkey,
revenging his bastards and bitches,
full to the tops of their britches with itches,
paranoias, and foul odors too.

Let's have a war!
My 12 ounce steak --
I'll start with you!

November 2004

Where does the time go ... ?

My uncle had a heart attack

He stood in the erasing white sun,
looking into the dark church,
at the icons gold and twinkling
in dim candlelight and swirling dust.

And his mind bit down,
on a brick, his heart,
shattering it so he could
fly through the door.

December 2004

Love is the only way out ... :)

Person

-animal-

I am 18 years old today and I look out on a life full of possibility. I will be a computer programmer. I will be a therapist and help others lose the pain. Or a realtor. I am going to make a lot of dough. I am leaving home; I am going to make a name for myself. You'd have to be stupid not to.

----animal----

I am 35 years old today. My twenties flew by like the wind. Accomplishments, some sadness and death. My mother is gone. I don't understand. It hurts and I don't know why. I wish my dad spent more time with me, but you have to make hay while the sun shines, right . . . I am wealthy. I build housing developments, I build lots of them. I can buy whatever I like. I just bought my wife a new Benz coupe. My daughter is six years old. I built a tree house bigger than some real people's houses. I pay my credit card bills. I drive my car everywhere. What can you do?

-----animal-----

I am 45 years old today. My wife is leaving me for her personal trainer. Trite but true. I'm making more money. My daughter and son don't really see me too much, but that's OK. I got a mil in the bank and I'm almost home free. This commuting is getting old though. And the lawn is dying. I guess I'll have to buy a new one. My father is in that home. It was hard putting him in there but my wife really wanted it. I just bought all this new sod and fertilizer for the yard. The Jenkins have a kick-ass yard. Show off mother fucker. I'm gonna water my lawn until it burns green into the back of his head.

-----animal-----

Just turned 57 today. Had to go see the doctor. Something about my bladder or maybe my prostate. Whatever, we'll know in a couple weeks. Peeing is a bitch. At least the Viagra is working. Like a hammer, my cock is a hammer. At least that's how it feels inside of the girls I've been dating lately. Just won an easement to build another 450 houses on some wetlands south of Denver. It's just too easy, putting these houses in. I'm like a housing hammer.

-----animal-----

My sixty-fifth birthday. I've been retired for six years. I built myself another house for me and my third wife, Ginny. Haven't seen my son for years, but my daughter stops by on Easter and Christmas. She's got her own family, two kids. I just bought her an Audi wagon. Ginny just dug up the garden again. Our new range works great, and it's a solid-top so it's easy to clean.

-----animal-----

I'm dead. Just happened. On the exercise machine, huffing and then I'm in the box and the only people at the wake are associates. Then I'm in the ground, I hear the dirt hitting the solid oak lid. Where's my son? Daughter? They must be up there somewhere. It's a drag, but here's the kicker: this cemetery is on the National Historical Register. No one can move it or build on it, ever. Ever. Funny, eh?

January 2005

La, la la la ... :)

Children of the Moon -- Work in Progress

Coyote

I think about my people, flowing through the prairies like hot red blood, our cries pierce the night winds and then die into the coolness of dawn. We were here before the men, we were here before the great beasts of smoke and light crashed through the night in their screaming drone.

We have looked and cried to the wind to heal the broken arrow that sits lodged in your souls. You, men and women forget the balance. We cannot forget the balance, for it comes upon us in the cold winter that ends too late to save our cubs. It comes in sickness that is passed from wolf to wolf from above. It comes when the moon is full and the snow is deep and there are no deer, no caribou, no mice and we starve, we die.

It is painful for us, but we accept, we bend to death as it rises up to kiss our haggard jaws. We bend, stooping finally to the earth, our kind and harsh mother, we bend and kiss and know our home and die.

The man does not bend. His cruelty bends and breaks all.

Nothing has arisen to bend the man, yet. His pride is great, will his wisdom be greater? Time will tell. But why does the Mother that created all allow the man to eat everything? Will the man eat all the forests even though they taste of dirt and decay? Will the man eat the dust? When it is all gone, will he chew the lovely grey dust?

The Crow

The wind takes me where I need to be, to see death, to glide on the new smells, the reeks of the world. There was a very old crow that told the tale of the man's iron horse, loud, braying, a knife in the night with a coughing mouth of foul soot, greasing up the sky as far as a wing could go. Ugly air. Ugly sky. I crawled at it, flew up and around it, but to no avail. The putrid stench of the man car carried on.

At first we could fly away from it, but as time wore on, more and more of these things filled first the ground and then the sky itself. Shrieking through the air and a foul stench they left behind. Inside sat the people. They wanted to fly like birds and so they did, they wanted to swim like fish and so they did, they wanted to run swift like the gazelle and so they did. But they never figured out what they were here for. All their time and frantic running goes where? Who are my lost brothers?

They cannot stop speaking, so maybe they are the story-tellers. The best of them will remember and tell our stories after we are gone. The worst will make sure we are gone all the sooner. I may be an old crow, but I have seen much, so much, my heart is broken and my voice is all I leave for the humans. A sharp dry crow, crow! Maybe they will take it as a warning. Maybe they will be moving too fast to hear me at all.

The Man

Why have my people never become the stewards, but always the butchers, the greedy ones, the empty children? I am afraid in a way that all the other animals are not. They seem to feel their path, their bones write it for them. Yet I must choose my way. I have some cursed freedom that they do not.

I wish I could remember the real things. It takes a whole life to learn about love, about sharing, about kindness. Unless you speak and act, it all goes to the grave with you. We write book upon book about speeding up our "connections," worshipping the dough, and tricking and taking advantage of our poorer brothers. Why?

The holy books have been stolen by the red-eyed cancer men. Without a story, how do we tell the next generation what really matters? How can we see past this towering wall of short-sightedness?

The Moon

I have watched and watch and watched. My hope is in the beating of the sea upon your shores, in the clouds that swirl across your darkened lands, in the lights I see when night comes to half of your world. When you visited me, I was scared. Scared to feel your foot on me, to have something in the emptiness. I was scared to love you. And I did, and you came and left and I felt for a brief moment what joy my brother the earth feels a billion times over: the love of life for life, for friendship, comrades, for a dance that never ends.

And that is my hope for you, my lovely earth. For my heart shivered at your touch and now I am alone again and the sadness settles back into my cold mountains and airless deserts. But you are not. May you keep that dance alive and may those who came and touched my aching emptiness, may those realize how rare and beautiful the dance of your host really is. Look at your brother moon; weep for my sadness but rejoice in your plenty and give thanks for the gift you have been given.

February 2005

I think I'm getting the hang of this!

Blood Bridge

On nights when the air changes to fall and a certain smell, cool and dry and like an old Navajo canyon, flits through my nose, I feel a tugging at my heart and I look up at the stars. My head jerks up like a marionette under the hands of a novice puppeteer. I have forgotten the stars, the mystery of the stars; it's not just some light show, some TV moment.

Looking out upon the universe, looking at God's creation, looking back into time, searching for patterns and symbol; astrology, constellations, scientific star classification, spectral colors, time machines and dreams. We always think we are looking up at something we understand, someone we know is up there. The original mirror.

It's a beautiful moment, soul-blooming, when the mirror shatters and the size of it all strikes home. It's not just a black cloth pricked with holes pouring light onto our imaginations; it's not just a place where the blood-hungry or kind-professorial life forms live. It's something else, some 'thing'.

If you look up and your eye catches the distance to the topmost branches of a nearby tree, then leaps to a low flying cloud, and then emboldened by that success, strains a bit and jumps for the moon; and if you feel that piece of you hitting the moon, spanning the distance, your soul grabs a sharp breath because you are that distance, that dizzying fall to the moon. Ah! Now you are on the moon and your powers are growing exponentially and you coil up and throw yourself out again, the viper of curiosity strikes out, hungry for a star and you leap! Out you go, trailing the memory of distance out from hundreds of thousands of miles to hundreds of light years. And you hang onto the feeling, the stretching of you across this unfathomable distance to another star, another burning sun.

You've leap-frogged to another star and all scales are broken. You are a tiny pulse of blood on a tiny scrap of stardust called the earth. Your heart beats and with each beat you fly across that emptiness and back, a pulsing strand of life, of spirit reaching out with love for something so far away that it might as well not even exist. And the thing you feel is the space, there is so much emptiness between you and your lassoed star. The universe is a lonely place.

It's the emptiness that breaks you, that unreels your connection and sends you spiraling back to earth, back through the physically un-travelable miles - like a dog too far from home, you turn and run for home.

The distance is gone, you stand again on the sidewalk, breathing in and out, looking up at the grand mystery of all those bright lights pouring through pinholes in that nice sheet of flat, black velvet.

The drought of space is just like the emptiness between people. But the distance to another person is so much easier to cross: A handshake, a hug, a word in jest or kindness.

The moments of courage come up all the time, and we can use the same techniques: Start small with a smile, then leap to a word, then emboldened, questions, talking, the weather, politics, and then we finally jump for the deep, go for the heart. Go from hundreds-of-miles conversations to hundreds-of-light-years conversations about your sick mom or dad, about your dreams for writing a book, leaving your job, finding love, about finding some meaning here and now.

And we stand at this distance and the space between has closed and there is no emptiness, it is full and we smile. Our laughter and tears are as deep as the starlight, as rich and gorgeous as the tapestry of the night sky.

March 2005

I think I'm getting the hang of this!

Singer Sing

P.J. Harvey, I don't know,
but I love, your voice
is the broken and fool night,
stained hands returning to the sea,
lips breaching a season of sadness,
lips stretching a sweet kiss
to gladness.

P.J. Harvey, this I pray,
if ever I meet you, please turn
away, grab up your guitar
and play, your mouth emptied of honey,
a heart broken with losing,
let love flood with words,
real as money, cruel
as choosing.

And loving, I don't know,
is joyous and new, no hands
on hips, swollen head in the moon,
souls speak and that's enough --
enough! Let this rough tongue bless,
"Spin on turntable!"
twist open, the heart,
in this chest.

April 2005

"I never promised you a rose garden.."

River Run

River rock and roll,
sputter over stones,
snowmelt is your father,
your mother births unseen.

Sitting at your frothing,
through spray and mist I see,
creation's mess and weave
shouting "You are free!"

Your turning trail is bound,
by tumbled rocks and trees,
but the thunder of your step
drums heartbeat to the sea.

I may be tied,
by years of turns and bends,
but with dancing feet I flow,
rolling til the end.

May 2005

Bushwacked again.

DEPRESSION

Ambulance sirens settle like
winter twilight,
bleached purples fading to black.
As if with another knife stab
I could again be entranced by your face.

Staggering, punctured,
your smile pours from the wounds
and I disappear
like a dying flashlight beam
near paper stars.

Coffee brewing,
I'll take two helpings
and return to silences on the phone,
our lost words
made novels by the years.

If this darkness has meaning,
please forgive the river
she can't speak what is
forgotten, what was
as real as these dim hands
in my dark bathroom mirror.

There must be new countries,

so soon I must travel
and be free of my fading,
this life of
no.

June 2005

Sometimes you feel like a nut, sometimes you don't...

Listen by Dean Pajevic

Wolf rolls across the sky howling, "Hello and Love -- I am all that too! I am wave water higher and bottle of glue, the fish on the forest floor, the man in the zoo, I'm open to reworking, edit me, do!"

"I'm a boat, a snout, a foot, a trout, I'm a basket holding the seven generations coming, the gown that is worn for executions, the voice of hatred crying the blood of the hated."

"Hey dude, wake up and smell the fresh rain and the wind in your face, walk the night road, don't worry the pace, crawl the highways: Snail is true, turtle is true. See the scales fall, understand, do!"

Yes, yes, I want this love, like this new bud shows. On the wall it's a shadow, the name that grows. On my heart, the hawk dives to go, leaps to know; put down the crusted face of the ringmaster, this paralysis show. I am the blood pumping across the face of ugliness, across the machine foot, across the grown men telling, killing, telling, killing.

Wolf crunches bones and proclaims, "War is a bucket filling with tears and salt water gears, turning and turning, no one sees it! No one will ever see it until ... BOOM! Not nice, don't be nice, don't be good, run naked in the woods, tear off the dank girdle of your country, of this shopping liberty, pay your fucking alimony to the raining sky, to me!"

Nude self, I chanced and cracked the stained, blood dried door to seek you in your furs and feathers, my wolf brother. They kill and kill and kill the clouds, the sap greened trees, the tiny hearts that pulse and pop. Stop. When you are gone there will be no more imagining. People will gargle lotus leaves in their A to Z wishlists, to-do lists, laundry lists, "Ten o'clock, time to shit!"

Wolf pranced on two legs waving his paws like a re-elected politician and crooned, "Cool, we have figured it out, it is all here now, no more secrets, confusion, doubt or wavering. No." Wolf winked and laughed and laughed and laughed.

I am the foot in your dental instruments door: Smash it shut! Smash it shut! Try! I will bleed but move no more. Your tired machines making gore are the tiny stabs of cancer, the darkness in the movie, the cut-out from the book, the baby that dies between the brother and the sister, the words that rise then fall unsaid.

No more. I am the wolf! Tears, throat, words, hands hold, legs stand -- alive, alive, alive!

July 2005

Whatever!

Not Fast Enough

I ride the gusts, the springing rains,
words bubbling up as new,
like sleeping in, and late to bed,
and waking up as two.

I sing the laugh, the summer light,
the joy that comes of full,
pick some peas, hum melodies,
run rampant in the wood.

I shed the tears, the autumn rain,
the apples fall to rot,
and all my plans, grand image,
blur and break and rust.

So shed this skin to winter wind,
peace, my soul, we're done;
my pen is fast, but not fast enough,
to slow the setting sun.

August 2005

"Roger One-Nine, over and out!"

Ciao. Nada.

Labrador Duck. Steller's Sea Cow.

Arabian Gazelle. Passenger Pigeon.

We shoot, we shout, we shoot --

no thought, tomorrow? What?

Killing easier than a kiss.

I wonder when will we go?

Go like the four-feet, the winged and hooved,

our brothers and sisters!

Taxidermy, farming, disease --

we brought many gifts --

shopping malls, parking lots,

pretending we are not furry, or laughing

or ever singing out like raucous parakeets.

Born free, but in-debted to corporate kings --

pity the fish, birds and trees whose lives

pay the kings ransoms.

September 2005

"Roger One-Nine, over and out!"

Why I Hate School

I remember being bound, alone. The teachers could see. Teachers were afraid to connect. I was a kid who needed someone to reach out. Like in, "Hey, how are you today?"

I was a funny, dark skinned kid with a weird last name. Racism? Let's call it blindness. Teachers hate in kids what they were never allowed to experience themselves. Freedom and fun.

I remember tests smelling like paste. The desks full of erasers. The endless math problems. I lived to fuck around, to play with the other kids. I was a rabble-rouser. And the rabble were a lot more alive than the croaky teachers.

Writing about this is like taking a hundred foot shit -- it's going to take time. It's going to hurt like hell.

I remember Ms. Montalbano; she was a pleasantly overweight Italian woman who had the verve and guts to mess with the kids. Most of the other teachers were just ghosts waiting for the final bell. Grade school ghost prison.

Floating carried me through the school days. I felt like the Lost Serbian Prince, too smart to join and too fucked up to ever be like anyone else. What a combo our house was: Cold distant dad and smoking fiery mom. Always thinking that they were going back to Serbia, that the United States (my life!) was an interlude before their Real Lives.

If my parents ever came to school to see me perform, it must have been early on. Or never. Nothing said about my Christmas singing, my friends and grades. Just get by, don't make any waves. Leave them to their "adult lives" of freaking out about past injustices, or fantasizing about empires of wealth in the future. Take it all back to Serbia. Show those fuckers.

I remember my forty-year-old dad's suits in the dark wood closet. Brown suits with cream-colored shirts. The suits didn't fit so well. Hence the girdle. What a fucking drag. And the white t-shirts and the white underwear and the socks that were held up by black garters. And the ties. All the brown and blue ties glossy and striped. Ah, old man! How I feel for you. Your shaggy seventies hair, fitted suit, cuff-links and garter-held socks. All balanced tight and wobbling on the man-bra-strapped gut. All just sadness packed away. Old prince, forty-years-old and gasping for an eighteen-year-old's innocence. A time before pain.

Dad, you could have been a poet, a truth teller, castles galore in a sky of Serbian tears. But you wanted that brown three-piece armor. So. My sister and I will wrench our mouths open to sift through the dust and cracked gold of our collective past -- happiness, sadness -- gifts, poisons, and all.

I always wanted to be Frodo, to have a purpose to write, right, the wrongs. Be the One. For Yugoslavs, there was only one One -- Tito. Then the father, then the mother. Kids were the slaves to make it all come true. Indentured, spirited away from homelands of freedom to break and be broken on their elder's cataracted, fractured dreams.

So what do I want to say? That I got a raw deal? That it all sucks. Sure, why not. No one else admits how much it hurts to be a helpless child. No one else cracks and stutters out the tears of lost days when dad was either lost to a machine, or booze or someone else's wife's pussy.

Kids just close their eyes and smile and shut up. I hate school because it was the same. Shut up. I hate school because teachers were supposed to do different. But teachers were parents like my parents, people like my people. The kids would have to fight alone.

But. Any freedom found would be ours to keep. Not to be stolen by dried-up, old children lost in tightening nooses of silent sadness.

October 2005

"As if I asked a common alms..."

Bones Found in Serbian

Horseflies on the beer keg
not a few, a carpet —
you'd think something had died.
Maybe I look as gross as I,
turn the wheel, pump the brake,
shuffle to the urinal, unzip my fly.

I wish your sunlit self at eighteen —
lipstick, giggles and pushing hands,
a light down covering your cheek —
were a movie I could lock
into my eyes,
cup in my groin,
press down onto the bed.

"Tick-tock, tick-tock."
Each breath flits, flies,
then pinned dead.
Tuxedoed butterfly.

Or, how about:

"Jesus slides off the cross..."
No hands, no witnesses, just
Turkish coffee, wheeling accordions,
designer shirts armpitted with sweat,
dusty black hats and incense,

droning brass horns, jiggling drums,
creased and crumpled grandpas sipping plum brandy,
bleached blonds with oiled, spotlight breasts,
spreading legs screaming
"show me the money!"

All for the chance to ... what?
Gossip and grind teeth at old photos?
Laugh at broken mirror putting on pants?
Heckle zit-faced kids dancing?
Spit on a missed kiss?
A wish-I-had word?
One hug untouched by time?

Fine. OK. Sure. Good. Fine.

My machine winds down,
alone is a skyscrapered city.
It is better to be out
in rock and evergreens,
unlock these ancient guns —
cerebellum, optic nerves,
liver, scrotum, vas deferens —
and topple from the throne.

Tears wet my torn roots,
dripping prayers for green buds,
after the war.

November 2005

"remember when..."

Kissing

Puppies wrestle,
girl and boy, pumped with blood,
your muscled arms vise me tight,
our moms scared of what might

come every spring.
Squirrels and birds,
even the trees, all sing,
all life witnessing

our awakened hands,
one-hair chest warm on new breasts,
blue jeans and hips rhyming,
chiming like heartbeats, guitar

strings strumming. Kids
keep lips together tight, sing
and wed old earth to stars,
cause now that I'm gray,

I'm grateful for the days
when kissing was THE stuff.

December 2005

"remember when..."

School

Round One

Naps. Pooping your pants.

Chalk. Fart noises. Boogers.

Glue. Yarn. Cursive. Lunchbox.

$9+5+17-11-2=?$.

Turning eyelids inside out. Ten sharp pencils.

$7 \times 6 = 42$. $5 \times 11 = 55$. $6 \times 8 = 48$. $9 \times 12 = ?$

The Presidents. Dear Marsha. Dear Sue.

Rosin and screeching violins.

Firecrackers. First chest hair.

Terrarium. Aquarium. Sumerians.

Fallopian tubes. Nocturnal emissions.

Bibliography. Fetal pig. Paramecium.

Kicked in the nuts. Acrylics and ceramics.

Cracking voices. Nose zits.

Sweaters filled with breasts.

Confirmation suit boners. Gym suit boners. Swimsuit boners.

Boners, boners, boners.

Spin the bottle. Shaving.

Driver's Ed. Parent's bed. Head.

Six-pack. Guitar strings. Brooding.

Orgasm. Orgasm. Orgasm.

Homework. Orgasm. Orgasm.

Orgasm. Homework. Orgasm.
Orgasm.

Diploma.

Round Two

Spell LOVE? Try ...

h-o-t-b-o-d? h-a-i-r-c-u-t?

r-e-n-t? p-e-r-m-a-n-e-n-t?

s-p-e-c-i-a-l e-v-e-n-t?

or even ...

a-r-m-o-r p-i-e-r-c-i-n-g?

s-u-p-e-r d-i-s-c-o-u-n-t?

g-u-a-r-a-n-t-e-e-d?

OK. OK. Umm ...

k-u-n-d-a-l-i-n-i? b-i-g p-e-e-n-i-e?

t-a-l-k-i-n-g? s-t-a-l-k-i-n-g?

s-e-e t-h-e l-i-g-h-t? t-o-n-i-g-h-t?

Heart of hearts? Maybe ...

k-i-s-s? d-i-s-s?

t-e-a-r-s? m-i-s-s?

h-a-n-d i-n h-a-n-d? t-h-e b-a-n-d?

s-h-i-v-e-r? c-h-e-s-t q-u-i-v-e-r?

t-h-e r-i-v-e-r. t-h-e s-e-a.

y-o-u. m-e.

Knockout

If father's arms wrap you tight,
if mother unclenches her shaking fist,
if daughter's scowl softens and smiles;
breathe and breathe and breathe.

This is what you wanted,
this is what you
 waited for.

If tears fall as you curse the steering wheel,
if sobs come as you push the grocery cart,
if your heart shakes you like a cold spring wind, let
your lips fall open, let
words tumble unbroken, let
them fly like soggy bread, let
them smack your soul with messy muck, let
love knock your soul
 unstuck.

January 2006

If you want to make a call, please deposit 25¢...

The War

We drove little, shiny scooters, like zipping paperclips. Rain soaked the broken asphalt as we needed through dizzy, whirling trucks that looked like teetering, run-away buildings.

Our mouths shot sparks. Words burned like meteors and then faded, lost in the crash and groan of traffic. Once, twice, our scooters side-by-side, our arms outstretched, our fingers touched. The city swirled like a great sluicing stomach. You asked if I'd ever live in a city this big. I said maybe.

I wore glasses with solid wood lenses. I peered through tree rings, looking down the years. You were the water coming up from the ground. Your nose was my nose. Your hands, my hands. Twinned together, we met your mom. She took us to houses encrusted with gold filigree and shiny baubles. Inside were oil paintings, still wet. While no one looked, we touched the paint. Our finger drew circles through the sloppy viridians and ochres. We signed our name with a squiggle.

Explosions and fire outside. An ancient, rusted battleship screeched along the concrete. Dead elephants lay draped over its bow. It turned its quivering guns toward the castle atop the hill. Dripping lava spewed forth. The castle burned. I felt lightheaded, my vision blurred, and then we were apart. I reached for your hands like a camera grabs for the fading light. We would meet again soon. We promised. A flash bloomed, your face lit bright, then gone. Our hands slipped and fell away. I joined the brigades to fight. You sped off, your fingers still wet with paint.

The Commander barked and pointed toward a darkened doorway. It led to the burning castle. My armor lay cold on my limbs. My machine gun felt cumbersome and odd, like a living being in my arms. I folded down the helmet shield over my face and stepped in. I was in an underground passage. The clank of my armor echoed down the hall like our parting words. I saw our hands

twist together like dirt and water in a fast flowing creek. Then I remembered the Commander's face. His medaled chest. His mouth and metal teeth. My stomach flipped, flopped, fell on its face. Could you wait a little longer? I walked for hours in darkness, then I saw light. A doorway. I lumbered outside.

Jewel-colored dragonfly planes soared overhead. Their mouths spat bullets and their bellies birthed bombs. Our soldiers stood ashen-faced dead in the courtyard. "Onward!" I shouted and pulled the trigger. My machine gun sang an opera of metal. A dragonfly crumpled into green and red flames. Again my gun sang. Fire lit the sky. Then I remembered. Oh my god! I looked around, but you were not there. I raised the gun until the dragonflies littered the ground in smoking graves of torn metal. Far away someone screamed. Someone moaned.

There was a blast of horns, hooves on the cobblestones. "The Queen! The Queen!" they shouted. She wore a smart gray business suit and sat astride a three-legged horse. In her hand was a bloody sword. "Look!" she cried and pointed toward the valley. The Lake was rising like vomit from the mouth of a drunk. It spewed over the smoldering dragonfly wrecks; each hissed, then was quiet. It gurgled on. The outlying hamlets were already drowned. Then it hit the buildings below the castle and chomped and chewed as the panicked people jumped out of windows or swam like mad dogs. "The people!" I cried. "No," said the Queen, "That part of town is not as nice as it looks." With her sword she pointed at the castle, "This is the nice part of town." But the water did not stop. It continued to eat. Her subjects drowned. With tears on my cheeks, I looked up. It was your face in the clouds. Your eyes were closed. Your mouth was silent.

I turned and ran, my armor falling from me as I sped through arch after crumbling arch. I stumbled into an old stone amphitheater. There were dancers leaping and turning to the beating of drums. A small group watched quietly: tourists in white walking shoes. I peered at them through a telescope, seeking your face, but you were not there. The music choked quiet. The tall dancer gazed on me. Then he spoke with a voice that sounded like raining shovelfuls of dirt, "Private reception." My hands shook. A stone gargoyle flapped his wings. Somewhere coffins filled a cafeteria. I fell through a torn velvet curtain.

Dust blew across the parking lot. The Commander waited. He saw me and smiled. His teeth were blinding. I raised my hand to shield my eyes. He stood near twenty gleaming, black, 1930s roadsters. "Booty," he yelled. He pulled a large silver key from his pocket and handed it to me. I grabbed it and all twenty cars started at once. Again I felt lightheaded and my vision blurred. With a sucking sound like a kidney draining, I split into twenty men. One for each car. We drove maniacally, elbows and knees pumping, clouds of dust in our wake, bouncing and shrieking out of the city and into the country. The lake was dry. The houses and people gone.

The sun spun three times across the sky before we stopped at a rusted metal sign. "Nature Preserve." We got out and stood before giant, 30-foot high mushrooms. They smelled of rot. I put my hand across my mouth and nose. On each mushroom was printed a word: Right, Wrong, Courage, Fidelity, Honor, Glory, Victory, Peace. The Commander stood atop a roadster and spoke, "This sorrowed, bone-filled land shall be 'healed' by these glorious fungi!" Twenty of me nodded. "Wonderful," we gagged through our fingers.

Flies buzzed like busy signals. Then I heard another sound. Low and deep. Drums. Drums beating from beyond the mushrooms. There was a narrow, crooked path, and we walked through. We were back in the cold stone amphitheater with the dancers. The drums bubbled and bounced. The dancers shuddered like leaves in a windstorm: once, twice, three times and then froze. The moon looked down. Silence. The moon coughed. One of my twenty selves stepped forward. "I-I-I'm late..." he began. The tall dancer with the dirt voice laughed and pointed, "She's right here." Twenty hearts leaped. The woman turned. My stomach flipped, flopped, fell on its face. It was not you. Empty shell-casings lay bunched at her feet. Her thinning hair was tied up in bones. And each eye stared like a chattering abacus.

I felt the lightheadedness and blurred vision one last time. All twenty of me collapsed back into one. She smiled and cracked her fingers. I pulled off my wooden glasses and turned away.

I had lost you.

February 2006

"I'm television sick, I'm television crazy..."

Suburban Lawn

Look! a many pointed stag,
silver muscles midnight-chiseled,
in my hands my keys, and I the visitor.

Moon transform this beast to Being,
scorn nobility and so bless,
the luck that made you look, this fire in your chest.

Heart to beat, mind to muscle,
ripple, fly, a ghost unbound,
ancient as the trees, gone without a sound.

March 2006

"Fine. How are you?"

What's a Word? A Lion?

For fuck's sake!

I can take no more
fine white fists and mocking mouths
holy places of pen and paper
invaded, raped
by commercial creeps
vampires and itchy asshole men
filet the language of our
animal history
grind Shakespeare into deodorant
and flinch at feeling anything
in their tightening, shrinking
collapsing rot-hole
hearts.

For god's sake!

Let the lion smash the cage
this lonely zoo is full
between the bars and the glass
no arms embrace
guttural howl of the king
dark mane arcs electric
Great Sadness Sings!

What is the lion's roar
without mate, without land?

The coda to the new song
of the prison machine man.

April 2006

"Swimmingly"

Metaphor

Love is like the sea. She washes over your beach of anger and confusion. Over and over and over again. Grain by grain you disappear. The salt water roils and swells and fills and recedes.

Hammer tight your barricades, shore-up the storm walls, ha! The sea smashes, grinds and slithers into your dry dust heart. Listen to her rumbling elephant voice, "love now, love now, love now."

The sea bursts with all the tears ever freed. All the tears we tried, imagined, didn't know we cried are there too. The sea has more hugs for tears than all the armies have holsters for all the guns in the world. And, her hugs will kill you. Billions of years of cunning, running and roll will find YOU.

"The seas loves too hard," you say. You are right. You win. And after you are done being right, be happy, let go and drown.

Drown, drown, drown.

May 2006

Zdravo! Kako ste?

Waking Again

Old elders of earth
share a secret with me:
the THINGS that you love,
disappear like a dream.

Because we're not machines,
we're monkeys in trees,
scrambling up towards fortunes,
stunned by mortality.

Help me walk in this fire,
past the pain to the power,
and see stars in the darkness,
find honor in hours.

June 2006

Forget? Forget what?!

Positive Void Coefficient Has Risen

I am no specialist.

The third angel blew his trumpet,
the fourth unit seems to have melted.

"What absolute nonsense!"

Before returning he took a dose of iodine,
and a huge star fell from the sky
closing all roads except Strontium 90,
Plutonium 239.

Perhaps they were lumps of concrete
thinking sadly of their wives. But
an order is an order, is a sweet taste,
feeling your legs grow weak.

Hot black rocks, just
ruins of beta particles.

If Chernobyl has suffered a misfortune
falling on a third of all the rivers and springs,
then we have our sacred principles:
Slabs of concrete.
Sheets of lead.

Bright sun on the beaches,
vomiting men bathe
in this new star called Wormwood;

that was within limits and norms
of atrocious radioactive vapor,
oozing out as bloody diarrhea,
rotting his lungs.

Because millions have suffered,
and are uninhabitable,
something has to be done.
Our conclusions are very firm:
his penis is peeling and black.

Which encouraged a spirit of improvisation
so that many people asked,
"Can we really live here any longer?"
And died.
Estimating the cost of cleaning
a median acute lethal dose.

July 2006

peace to everybody

Aspens

The dusty dry plant smell of the Steamboat night, like camphor and myrrh. A giant church in the searing bronze moonlight.

Fluttering fades

gold flows into the sky

hair grays

bees return to hive

melting snow

a green sun leaves

Brilliant gold

burnished underground

fills the tips of quivering leaves

scattered ashes

the roll of wave

white sun

old graves

The leaves flutter

incandescent

flitting gold

to the blue

depositing secrets in the stars

turning sienna

lilting to dirt

Green grows
like a sunrise
measuring moments til
chlorophyll bleeds
gold

Half the air at 10,000 feet
twin hawks spin silence

Crimson petal bleeds
spiked pinecone bleeds
sparkled rock vein bleeds
whirling chalk dust bleeds
lightwhite bleeds
oxygen to vacuum bleeds
breath bleeds
incisor bleeds
knuckle bleeds
hemoglobin bleeds
at the edges of things

How can I describe the hills?
Dull gold stuck green pines
faded stiff grasses
rocks like elbows, waists
provocative
sex hidden in ocher brambles
and dirt

Thousands of gold butterflies
affixed to skeleton sap filled

stirred
delicate chimes

How long a cow's skull
trapped
before freeing life
into humus
into oxygen
into chloroplast
into cow?

In three hundred years
a tree fills space
one hundred feet high
forty-five feet wide
eighty feet down

In three hundred years
tree not budged
but seen the same
cumulus cirrostratus granite
flow through twelve hundred
breaths
frost bud leaf fruit

One hundred nine thousand five hundred
blithe dawns blistered noons blushed twilights
the same
stratus altostratus quartz
are a river gushing swirl
in the gold fluttered iris

of three hundred years

August 2006

peace to everybody

History Again

Bummed as money, as...

brittle leaf falling,

man shaving and cut,

skeleton birthdays,

Shakespeare's dry pen.

Sad as a porno tattoo, as...

a blast of cocaine before dialing,

liquor and Easter,

dead flies and pubic hairs,

mannequins between seasons.

Grieving as the sun before rising, as...

if it could revive me,

and this silence of history

is the Buddha before --

the world surprised.

September 2006

peace to everybody

The Meteor

Ash hair and marble hands,
backhoe digs a trench
for your tinder smile.

Wood cross carved
with the legal years of you,
I carry, perverse,
like the bear begging
honey from the gun.

All those dates cut my arms,
cut this cancered cord from life
to soul. I will cry no more,
walk away from this hole,
finally be the meteor,

and light my midnight sky.
Fly bear, flee the bullet,
in tears embrace my blood --
roil, flash and burn away
the husk I called a heart.

October 2006

peace to everybody

winter, 1993

scream feedback, shatter glass dome, The Verve cracks chicago,
I the night air, you the sea surrenders to phantom whale songs,
and the dark new moon, water and salt gauzed over blood,
a haze gauze aflame in 18th century oil lamps, whaler tearing timbers
as the drums and bass blow into a storm in heaven,
Richard sings bone fire, his voice rising like the sun,
but hidden iceberg moon is all there ever was.

twilight whales, rushed by cannoned drums from ice,
the guitar gun fires, midnight and heat metal flies, then takes,
Richard's voice bows in black water and the lanterns swing, then fizzle

apart, you test veins, whale bones and your brain, your veins,
murder your voice until you hear, whales keen and wheel,
drowning, lunar ice veins, all blood seeped with sun,
the sun, your blood soaked in sun!

the band burns, your voice is light and sound is night,
is all I have, my sight silent on the seafloor,
memories of whale thrust and spray,

sway some more my love, whale veins sing with sun,
veins and the sun, sun, sun!

November 2006

A Soul Available

1 in 62,457,900

"A family of mullets,
a seventies Chevy,
a black squirrel."

I came back home to find it unchanged.
The people were big like big pork balloons,
the grocery happy with sweet cakes and larded donuts.

So many haircuts attempted
at home in the bathroom, or
while smoking cigarettes around the kitchen table.

Outside it rains in long gray clouds like hearses
sliding over the dirty raincoat of a lake.
A black squirrel slouches on a greasy picnic table,
a peanut in his tough little paws.

Where do they find those nuts?

In the burning eyes of an old man
revving his 1972 Chevy Camero
waiting out the red light at Sherman and Henry.

The light turns and he cracks the shell with his teeth,
goosing out the nut. There are more,
a full bag of salted peanuts on the passenger seat.

The old man pulls in the driveway,
"Hey grandpa! Hey!" his grandson shouts.
The old man smiles and pops open the door, forgetting
his sixty-eight years of aches and
hobbles, crab-like quick, with arms open to embrace
this electric spark of his distant loins.

The peanuts sit bulging in their crinkly clear plastic.

Up in the maple tree, another black squirrel
peers down into the open passenger window
at her Super Powerball Lotto Jackpot winning ticket.

December 2006

A Soul Available

That Turd

The man who shits,
pants down, squatting
in the street, is prophet.

Cause these times cackle
behind glass,
sneer in freezers,
mock from carpeted mansions.

That turd, reeking on concrete
unassailable, finally
cracks the perfumed bottle
riddled with soldiers, tanks,
oiled jailers, machete makers,
cattle prod stickers – all
spill from the shit-shattered
glass.

The voices stop.

And tiny hearts
turn.

Beat.

January 2007

A Soul Available

Brother

you always surprised me.

I watched your hand tear

the stars from the loom--

boy did we get into trouble for that!

And knocking up the wine,

and milking the wolf, and slaying

the bone-headed minotaur.

I bowed to you

cause you always did

what the teachers said "no" to,

what made the dad's shout "No!"

What made the gills on the fish pump

in and out --

toppling castles with our blood,

dousing the ancient senators with our belches,

our heckling pasted across the doric columns:

red, red, red!

as the dying fish gills flapping in the dirt

singing, singing, louder than the

"No! No! No!"

Brother I wish you were here
so we could laugh at all the "No!"
coming down the centuries.

February 2007

A Soul Available

Fast We Go

The sun, this road,
shadows and rush
of cars, foot to floor—
fast we go, fast we go.

This book, these poems,
a mark of words, a try,
a wink, the rabbit flies—
fast we go, fast we go.

This water, that grass,
mills milling, wheels
spinning, always winning—
so fast we go, so fast.

March 2007

A Soul Available

Being

You ever get tired
of the walk,
the smile,
“hello,”
greasing wheels,
heavy bricks so carefully piled?

If it's all about the numbers on the dial
then turn the wheel awhile, pile
words like bricks
mostly shtick,
but once in while, you rip,
and bang goes the big window,

bang it falls, and for a moment
you fly, not crawl.

Being is worth
it, all sharp pieces.
All the dumb dumb, then bless
ings. Peace-es.

May 2007

A Soul Available

Winter

Falling soft hammer,
white puddles my mind,
freezing my phone,
nothing changes. Time
to act, up my arms up!
But a tin wraps all,
rivets on the hours,
slow to rust. Snow

bends the distance,
into the cooing of a dove,
sleep and fear collide,
a wreckage of wool. Words.

June 2007

A Soul Available

Famous People

Pull down the shade,
turn the page,
swimmer, this is the final lap
father, the lawn mower is stuck
we have to push it through the tall grass.

I wish I had perfect hair
so I wouldn't laugh so much,
so I could write the numbers,
and the press of my slacks
kept the grass short, and the dreams
shuttered in stone corridors.

I wish this water knew me
only as gold medalist, as a pose,
perfect for you this moment,
as the bus stops,
and you fold me into your magazine,
and walk briskly to your doom.

July 2007

A Soul Available

My Rock

My rock is a clock-
work, lots of little pieces,
tripping home from school.

I threw a rock through a window,
laughing as fireworks
exploded under a wheelchair.

I dialed the phone,
frightening the old
with cruel words.

My clockwork was built
by some Turks, Austrians,
and Serbs -- beating
a child with a shoe, slapping
a joking mouth in church.

While the fields flow in grass,
my rock is encircled in grass.

The clockwork rocks on,
but the grass is the story
unending.

Just a long exhalation

of sunrise and sunset:
the green thrumming world.

“The rock! the rock!” I cry.
But the grass is true memory,
the good in God.

The cars at the railroad
crossing, clanging bells,
pulsing red lights--
the cars wait.

The wind blows over the fields.

September 2007

A Soul Available

Kerouac - Part 1

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Kerouac was born March 12, 1922. Baptized Jean Louis Lebris de Kerouac. Known as "Ti Jean," Little Jack. Pisces.

I was born January 21, 1966. Baptized Dean Nikola Pajevic. Known as Mags. Aquarius.

I melt the water and spill it. Kerouac flits and flaps, breathes it.

"As the river poured down from mid-America by starlight I knew, I knew like mad that everything I had ever known and would ever know was One."

The one and only quality which originates with Pisces is a prescient power to stand outside oneself and see yesterday, today and tomorrow as One.

In my Oxford American Dictionary, I reached to place his name. Not there. But nearby were the words:

Ker nel n. The tender (orgasmically edible) quivering inside the shell of a Nut. The central or cataclysmic part of a scream or poem or exaltation etc.

Key n. A refined piece of starstuff woven so it will move the bolt of a lock to tears and so unlock the soul. Ghosts that provides anarchy or insight .

I am writing for my sanity. Its tricolor flag of black, black, and black. Every sorrow howling and alive. Neurons whipped into a froth flung hard against the subway electric third rail, buzzing like

breath and schloomed WOW into the hard white, tiny pupil brightness. I have to see it. I have to understand bewitching deep sky.ky.ky.ky.ky.ky.ky.ky.

October 2007

A Soul Available

Kerouac - Part 2

Writing and love. Like when you meet and eyes shine and your guts shift falling apart like a landslide, and you squeak out,

"Ruin me. Rend. My heart wails like Enrico Caruso. I've sung two thousand miles to fall out of your sky. Let's wrestle. The winner renames the flowers and the trees and the people. Let's rename the people!"

The name Pajevic lies near:

Pair v. To love together. Mermaid. Copernicus. Meddle. n. Two blown bulbs or lovers joined. A single kiss having two like parts enraptured in saliva. A set of hatreds or tender hands making a whole.

Pal ace n. A royal laughter. An open air boudoir used for public embarrassment.

Aquarius, me, is perpetual mindfuck. The Holy Shit Grail! Hanging by the neck simply leaves me curious to pollinate Hyacinth Mysterium. I am always Rorschach Binet Probationary Throw-Out-A-Feeler Clairvoyant Fingernails, black lab tongues, "Guard thy bearded mailman."

When I discover Atlantis and the winged Merman, I'll shrug, ah, and skip akimbo. Oh Aquarius! Flip and spill fountains, but with your atomic attention flung far and wide by the churlish and violent Uranus, orb of chaos.

November 2007

A Soul Available

Kerouac - Part 3

The Aquarian has to dig and dig and spill and spill.

Piscean Kerouac is. He swims.

In the mirrored gold iris of the fish, the entire scene of life is shadowed and fleeting. The fish flit and fin with the concrete current. Very few can stand being netted for long in one tributary, or one silver scaled mind.

Pisces is the twelfth sign, a composite of all that's danced before. They have already breathed the other eleven signs of the zodiac. Old Souls. Life as the fish is a chance to reach Nirvana. Death and Eternity. To get off the Road.

"I realized that I had died and been reborn numberless times but just didn't remember especially because the transitions from life to death and back to life are so ghostly easy, a magical action for naught, like falling asleep and waking up again a million times, the utter casualness and deep ignorance of it. I realized it was only because of the stability of the intrinsic Mind that these ripples of birth and death took place, like the action of wind on a sheet of pure, serene, mirror-like water."

On the Road

The Piscean memory is legendary. The fish has a huge dorsal fin that vivifies the wild. The fish is neither fixed nor cardinal. The fish is mutable, undiluted. He keeps to the Road.

"Don't stop to think of words but to see the picture better." Kerouac.

The fish leaps the rocks to wet the hearts of the bleeding and the gargantuan, the Promethean and the electron, no matter how Weirde or Truue. The fish judges no one -- thief, murderer, priest, stockbroker, teacher, addict, pervert, mother, father, freak, hypocrite, statue. His understanding overflows even while he swims into every vice and virtue, every damn smile.

January/February 2008

Literary Series

Intermission — On My Road

It was late Thursday night, maybe Friday morning. The hanging bag dripped a sugar solution down a thin white plastic hose into his father's arm. The skin was splotchy and thin like over-stretched dough.

The son slouched in a padded green chair next to the bed. Out past the window, snow swirled around a sodium streetlight. Flakes caught the light like a noose of dandruff, then tightened, then disappeared. Then again.

The son was awake, electric from the half-finished cup of thin, scalding coffee in a chewed styrofoam cup. He picked his cuticles, working on a little strip of skin until it stood up like paper. Then he bit it off, toying it with his teeth, then spitting it to the floor.

He stared at his father. The old man's breath hardly stirred his stark-rib chest. He put his thumb against his teeth and bit down.

A thin stream of greenish light came under the crack in the door. A yellow bruise dripped through the window. They met on the marble floor in a glowing smear. It reminded him of the liquid remains on an autopsy table.

He bit down hard and winced. Blood. He felt the piece of flesh grind between his teeth. He worked it around from front to back. He spit it out and reached for the coffee.

The wind moaned long and low. He sipped. He sipped again. The snow fell harder.

March-April 2008

Literary Series

Kerouac —Part 4

Key n. One of a set of bone levers abetting magically with the fingers to infuse a musical instrument, or orchestrate a typewriter. Pair n. Two cards of the same revolution, a pair of Jokers.

Kerouac muddles me to see my life through the fish. Receptive to all, no complaint, no jury, no gas chambers. However the Deciduous Oblongata grows, that's how I shall worship it.

Kerouac swims Oneness. Instinctual, caloric unfolding emotional bond with the universe. Like the moon tides, like the caresses of planets. Like the empty stretches of the Road. Like my box of rain. I will splash around a bit before I weep and entwine any more of the world.

The tippity tapping typewriter. Key of D minor. In "On the Road," he says "sad" in at least a hundred permutations. The notes on the page are always exact, like the number of hairs on my head, like the position of Uranus at birth. But it is up to the musician to sing his music. Kerouac blasts double four time. With each line his Old Soul engages our temporality.

Yeah, I looked through the Earth and all I saw were stars. The largest, our sun, flaming in the empty vault of heaven. It tears at me. I spill. Kerouac's gills turn red. red. red.

May-June 2008

Literary Series

Public Works

Poem speak!

Kill the reek of history:

knife-mad generals,

in gold faces,

ascending hills of bones.

Where is the hand

on the breast? Eyes

small as hope

a few days old?

That doesn't make TV,

newspapers, statues.

Cause the good act needs no

monument, just the killers

guilt-mad crave

the lies of marble,

the ashes of symphonies.

July-August 2008

Literary Series

xeno-phoo-bik

Dispel another false impression --
dirty beard, s/elves and texts
keep y/our lipS Soft.

Underrated humanist, NSFW,
the camel's horn and you,
you ask questions...

I URGENTLY NEED **PRAYER** AT MY HOUSE
I HAVE NO MONEY TO BUY FOOD MEDICINE
I HAVE **STRANGE** PROBLEM IN MY HOUSE
ALL HOUSE MEMBERS ARE.

Go ahead. **THOU DO.**
Didst U miraculously cure
a little child by reason?

I will di3 and offend th33 again,
purse of coins, an affliction of the throat.

Squawk.

November-December 2008

Literary Series

Final Issue, Issue 89

Jovo

the air had heat, the sun-bleached rocks sat like bones
my uncle tumbled and piled them up into a cairn for our stove

we set the old pot, like an ancient crusted war helmet, on the flames

like gods, we poured the sea into its emptiness

each mussel a water slick black rock
it chinked into the hot waves like a coin paid for this time we took together

my uncle, a statue, a roman god, a crown of wispy light hair
his feet two plowshares carving me with each step
his journey filled by starlight, guns, asleep in the dirt before battle
asleep in the Denir wood outside of Beograd
asleep with each tilt of the wine bottle
asleep until the dirt took him in hard mother fists

asleep in the rushing river of wine carving his rough rock cheeks, his dirt and blood knobbed
knuckles, his thighs and shins pumping though the green leaves, through rain, through the
thunder of Messerschmitt cannon and Stuka screams

a river of grapes for this fifteen year old warrior, this twenty year old father, for this dying fifty
year old man tending a pot of mussels with his grandson

dying with each rush, each sluice and wash of the fall harvest that dripped and chiseled away at each granite memory, sharp and jagged and dangerous as the rocks on which we cooked our pot of mussels

his skull should have been filled with round rock memories of laughter and kissing girls

but he marched with Tito and shot people in the head, in the arms, in the legs, in the heart
but he built a new country: brother for brother, sister for sister, all under one father Tito
no more serbs, no more croats, no more muslims

we are Jugoslavs
he spat, he drank

like a mussel into the pot he went to that work, so sure that he would be the one to survive the flames
of a general with a gold toilet, of cronies kisses, of his wife's hidden hands, of his own slow drowning

the gallons of grapes bit into him, tearing granite memories, ripping the tips off of each diamond word

a gushing purple ground down the petty betrayals from pressed shirts that sat on prussian chairs and ottoman carpets

each red necktie a jesus, a litany of crucifixions that filled all pots to boiling

the bottle tips back, like the moon rises, like the sun sets, and the stones in my uncles skull are smoothed round

he looks at me and smiles, his eyes red-rimed, three day beard rings a mouth light in teeth, and I see a happiness light on that face

I feel a twisting in my guts I might later call love

we stir the pot with a twist of driftwood, until all the mussels have cooked and opened

I hand him a bowl, he fills it, then another

he tears chunks of bread and hands me mine with the slow-arm-sweep of a priest

the bottle comes to me, I swig, it burns and warms like some saltwater kiss

and we chew the tender flesh, sopping our bread into the juice, and stare into the lulling hug of
the sea