

EYES IN THE HEART

Selected Poems

By

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Eyes in the Heart

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Dedicated to many friends in Eastern Europe
whose kindness and gracious hospitality
made this volume possible.

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A.C.

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HISTORY, IS THE COLOR OF MUSTARD

Mustard flowers fill the fields
each spring waiting.
Some get picked and some passed over
forgotten, with the winds.

How much like mustard are events
we tell many times
in many ways, while others
collect dust
on shelves, the aftertaste of ochre.

Like wandering souls
we tell of fame, fortune, and exalted egos
in spring's wake, we would partake storytelling
history, is the color of mustard
coming with its season.

Retold the curling of the leaf, in its hour
a little differently each time
as the bee will pick and choose its nectar
or pass over, the virgin.

PROMENADE IN MAY

Along the streets of Kiev
The heavenly upright cones greet me everywhere
Nesting restful in the kastani.
The pink ones kiss the lips of my soul.
The red ones exhale hopes of tomorrow.

TRAVELLING ABROAD

One fine day I left familiarity and routine
to meet colleagues and friends in
Lithuania, Russia, and the Ukraine.
To my surprise, my first discovery
was my body, how it would disagree.

For many a day, I slept a sleepless night.
I somnambulated stony Eastern European streets.
Raising strange expressions, my appearance I imagined
akin to a misplaced vagrant and humorous distraction.

Mer countless hours wasted, on the seventh day
from this unwelcomed plague of travelers, my
swollen eyes and stuporous state gave sway.
At last, there came relief; my friends and I would greet, for
my body and my mind were one, once
more much to my surprise.

SOUNDS THEN AND NOW

There was a time when
I would wake up to the warbling of birds
as a boy, I remember outside my bedroom window
the growing lights of morning playing
with the rustlings in the bush
and I could hear the seashore in my ears.

Today they fly to other lands.
The early morning light peers in my window
to make me bear witness to the cacophony outside.
I hear swooshing cars, stepping feet, and flushing toilets.
The morning paper hits my front door with a smack
mixing with a whistle and the cry of a baby.
But sometimes I can hear a chirping-faint shrills
like a thread released through the curtain.

ES.CAR.GO

Up the glass it slided.
I watched its trail come forth
to the midpane where it stopped.
It stopped, it seemed, to check the view.

When on its way
it spewed more dung and dew.
I watched its trail appear, mystified
in witness to all it slew

A MISPLACED PILL

In my bathroom once, I noticed what
connected window sash and sill.
It was a small white pill.

At first I thought it was misplaced
dropped from my medicine cabinet.
Yet when my finger touched its hind, it came alive.
It wandered off indignant-insulted and distattered.

It was a small white spider.
It left me, I think to find some other place
where it could, most assuredly become
a misplaced pill once more.

TIME

It runs
like a passing pyramid of sand
though you may, try
to cup it in your hands, the grains
slowly slip and sink between
your fingers leaving
only a few particles
that once seemed
real.

LIKE CLOCK WORK

Tick, tick...tack
I race around the track
Every day from nine to five
Ticky, ticky, tack.

Tick, tick...tock
O work around the clock
I wish I was a rock
Ticky, ticky, tock

'August 1981

ON THE STAKE

At last it is clear: She is on the stake!
The child has made his nest
a messy nest indeed, with
 lack of vision
 careless haste
 self-interest
 greed
he has pushed aside
 rock and stream
 bush and tree
 bird and beast
 woman and man
in the name of every
 ego
 ideology
 diety,
 while
Mother suffers in his wake.

TAKE ME AWAY

Take me to town and I won't cry
She has crushed ice in her eyes
Take me down by the river to die
She has such a cold finger
I hear her, she beckons
She spins her spell of sin
Take me away

Take me from her hotel bars, night clubs, restaurants
She has arms of silk warm entrappings
Take me down to the river, I won't cry anymore
She kisses with the sweetness of death
Take me away from the silver in her veins
She loves nothing, no one
Take me away

POEM MAKING

One night out in ponder
in my weary word-beaten brain
came a blinding verbal barrage
the likes I've never seen.

I tried to tame the thunderstorm
and make sense of disorder.
I wrestled with the witch
of the swirling wonder.

But as sudden as she came
she left me soaked in her reign
to sort out on the paper some
semblance of what I'd been.

1991

EASTWARD CROSSING

The road fell slavish
to the hammer and sickle
stretching away, distant
asphalt arm yearning
to an unknown horizon.

[NoteS:

Written 13 July 1991, while residing in Galicino outside Moscow, a well known retreat center of the former Soviet bureaucracy, where I reminisced on my crossing by car the state of Nevada two decades earlier and parallelisms between my life then and those of Russian citizens, who have crossed a political threshold within the former USSR.]

TERMINAL

Sensing the end
they followed
where ever

they followed
vultures
for his signature

[Note:

I often wonder whether this poem, written and revised
several times during the two years before, **was my form**
of premonition of the fall of the former USSR .]

IN MOSCOW

I walked naked on
among cobbled drops
for fresh thoughts
on wet old souls.

[Notes:

Written . 11 July 1991 ,on the ,inauguration of Boris
Yeltsin to the Presidency of Russia, hours after a walk
on ,the cobble-stones in the rain among 'the cathedrals
within the Kremlin.]

VAST TERRITORY JOINED

Without words we feel as one
we fan our thoughts to free the void
across the miles unseen
across the time unknown

In disguise, our words of love
we close the void, between
across time we entwine
across the miles unseen.

GRANDFATHER CLOCK

I'm grandfather clock against the wall,
Not wide and fat, but thin and tall.
I'm next to a lamp in the living room,
The one that is dusted with a broom.

I see the sun rise, from behind the hill,
welcomed by birds with song and shrill.
I greet it with a yawn and a sigh,
And wipe the sleep from my drowsy eye.

I wake the kids quarter to nine,
It never fails, they're right on time,
Down the stairs with a skip and a hop,
Full of pep, they never stop.

I'm against the wall throughout the day,
I see many things that pass my way,
Many I've seen old and new,
Here are a couple to mention a few.

When Christmas season rolled around,
We bought a tree from a nearby town,
Put ribbons and candy cane in its hair,
And presents beneath, we were to share.

On Christmas day it fell on Dad,
And you should have seen him, so mad,

When long last he managed to climb out,
He looked like Santa, without a doubt.

Every day I get wound
by the chief of the house with a frown,
Though he is O.K. I'm only sore,
If when he's through, he slams my door.

Once a mouse in the house could find no cheese.
Out of his hole he came with a squeeze.
He looked both ways, then nibbled my side,
And boy did the cat wax his hide!

The kids used to pull on my gongs,
Until it looked like something was wrong,
But Dad fixed me and to tell the best,
He put new windows on my chest.

An earthquake struck, and what a fall,
Since then I've been fastened to the wall,
A scratch and a knick I got from that,
A hiss and a pout when I bruised the cat.

There they are the big and small,
It is the truth, I'll swear by all,
And if one day you don't have the time
Then glance my way, 'tis no crime.

[Notes: Written for children, 31 May 1959.]

MINDFUL

All day long
incessant unceasing
chatter
relentless machinations
the mind runs off at the mouth
a rabid dog

November 1980

TEDIUM

Time in restaurants and cafes
seems labor less
and boring.

What a locust I've become
among the duties of my week
a caffeine sipper over pages of paperwork.

What hedonistic daydreams I must conjure
for sensuous uplifts to take me above
the clouds of my dull drums.

October 1981

ALONE

when all is said
and all is done
you stand alone;

a solitary soul
in time and space
walking hand in hand with the shore
between
the land, holding fast
and the beyond
extending ever more
into
the huge ocean of the unknown

March 1983

IN THE USSR

"Back, back in the USSR!
Oh boy, how lucky you are.
Back, back ... in the USSR."

Leningrad. Heavy oppressiveness
weighted, burdened, trapped in its past
willingly engaged in the grand self-deception to
resist movement into the twentieth century
though many might jump at the chance to have
the comforts I take for granted far into the West.

Moscow turned a lively modernity,
in Stalin's shadow a step behind,
filled with tourists from within and without.
It is the USSR, busy in daily concerns.

Careful! It is for Intourist to segregate my parties,
my person of the West from your parties, anyone
from the provinces at all times. We eat our meals
mostly in our hotel, exchanging wistful stares
from assigned tables at designated times.

The skillful guide herds us like sheep to and from
the bus and predetermined sites of daily excursions
between curfewed nights in a hotel room shared
with one total stranger, rust colored water, and
toilet paper with a sand-like cardboardish texture.

The hotels employ many people.
There is no unemployment problem by definition.
On each floor a custodian puts in long hours at her desk
keeping accounts of the keys, which require a paper pass
from me to obtain-a pass to carry at all times-in
exchange for my room key.

A general malaise in the manner of all I met, seems
to grip the populace, coupled with a seemingly intense,
intense irritation with me, and with whomever
I am so unfortunate that our paths must cross.
Service with disinterest and neglect commonly leads to
a three hour meal in a Moscow restaurant.
There is little incentive to serve, to care,
to know the opportunity to excel.

Occupying prominence, bold red phrases and red stars,
propaganda, the commercial billboards of the USSR,
placed above all, reminding all, who is in charge,
in sharp contrast to the neutral greys
of the dusty building sides and sooty byways.

[Notes: Title and first stanza is taken from the song by
the Beatles "Back, back in the USSR!" It provokes me
still, identifying with the Beatles generation, and having
first visited the former Soviet Union in 1962, young and
impressionistic, but later to return in 1983 and 1996.

THE SOUL OF THE NATION

1

Her skin writhes in pain.
It slowly withers in their hands.
They walk as blind masses
stepping out larger soars
seeing only their hunger
not their burns,

2

To walk over into face and
walk and enlarge Her soars,
they really think they understand
and ever more seal their fate.
To walk over her face to score, it is
their time to make their mark eternal,

3

To some visionary's shore
they row, yonder
they heel and row
they really think they are
they think they are
in command,

4

The hour is late
though hours may
She may amend
though fraught they are
through and through, too
greed-ridden to comprehend,

5

They come a plenty, they come
still they come, expecting
to aggregate their kind conflicting
struggle to reap the creme
of where global exploitation ends
to prostrate the promised land,

6

Her skin writhes in pain.
It slowly withers at their hands.
Desires transformed, dissolution rains
collecting, building sediment
for the coming
co-evolutionary forms.

YELLOW ROSE

touching
pedals softly
unfold
embrace
two hearts
dare hold
the secret of
the yellow rose.

FIRST MEMORY

I can not recall exactly
when it first came
but I do recall

an instance very early,

I walked across the porch
my eyes under the rail
taking glances to the backyard

below

then it caught my eye
from above the morning glory
in elegant form
soft curvature, moving over supple pedals
subtle gradations with azure for purple
lightning radiance before shadow.

Impressions for one thousand years
I am stuck on the sight of it

awe struck.

I was linked by an invisible thread

drawn back

to stare again and again at the glory
to be drawn out to last for a lifetime.

Then more, I saw myself
looking at it

touching
smelling.

These impressions replay
like an old time picture show
a reiterating icon
to play out for a lifetime
of my recovered history.

[Notes: 1984)

PLEASANT & CO.

Work and play are like
brother and sister:

on some days

the best of friends

on others

the worst of enemies

but more often than not,
pleasant companions.

March 1983

YOUR TIME

Precious mountain of moments
popping into oblivion with
minuscule imperceptible slowness.
Better blossoming in deed
than barren in worry.
Inevitably, we become
someone else's memory.

April 1992

KING SALMON RUNS

Huge tired stillness
Vital suspension
Eye-washed coldness
Streaming generation
Facing death

February 1992

MOUNTAIN RIVER HIKE

Variegated crimped worn wrinkled hands huddling
downward crowd the flushing delicious waters
weaving relentlessly through.

A fir fallen across the streaming frenzy
coated with liquid snow rushing over
in creamy brilliance, lies silent.

A bear paw print pressed into the granite sand
signature to whose presence
my unnatural passage intrudes.

[Notes:

. Written June 1995, after a hike along the river leaving
Shirley Canyon into the Olympic Valley, California.]

UNTITLED

in a world
of carelessness

you are
the car
you drive

in a world
of carelessness

you are
the clothes
you wear

in a world
of carelessness

you are
the work
you bear

in a world
of carelessness

February 1993

THIRD TOUR OF DUTY

Lying on the railroad platform
dead in a box
he resurrected our faith and resignation.

Lying flushed and bareheaded,
OUT everyday politeness and gratitude in common
twisting around the decade on a piano stool.

He went out
like a candle in a tornado.
Did he have to go-and go, one more time?

arc

March 1994

Rhooos, Greece

Note: A reoccurring dream image of college acquaintances, who left for the Vietnam War, and I never saw again.]

HORIZON

earth and sky
play and copulate
to nothing

arc

August 1994

Mullsjo,Slyeden

Note: *Mter* a long train ride on the Innlands banen up
the length of Sweden and crossing the Artic Circle.]

GHOST

Thy invisible being
in genuine intent
you can be seen
in the light
only when blind.

arc
August 1994
Mullsjö, Sweden

LOOK THEE, AUTHOR

Be it for thee to wipe thy brow
Between a bushy busy pen and neglect
There flows forth a prodigious slate
Heaped upon all extrusions of human thought.

Provincial winds heave sighs of indifference
Against stone -lichened and walled by recompense.
Torture fueled torture consumes life's journey
Whereby bleed inner knots to gushing text.

arc
August 1994
Mullsjö, Sweden

GOD DO I MISS THE STARS

When I was a boy on a midsummer's night
I could rocket my dreams to the skies
and watch them ricochet from star to star
fantasies soaring in wonder and delight.

Back then the heavens were black molten tar
with the glistening jewels of a million royal crowns
so many in fact that I woke the next day
eyes dazzling still in the labyrinth of their light.

As I stare today on a midsummer's night
city-bleached by the wash of a thousand lamps
its eerie cast dooms my hope as I strain to catch
my youth through a canopy that bars my sight.

Sparsely pocked, the loners twinkle and compete
to attract my eye, though they seem of a different hue.
I yearn for the heavenly sea of playful dreams
where I used to roam among celestial giants.

Under heavens barren I will sleep the night
the keeper of a decimated watch;
loners pass and fade into dawn's light.
God, do I miss the stars!

OXYEPIGRAM

You can fool someone most of the time.
And you can fool everyone some of the time.
But at no time can you fool an oxymoron.

November 1994

COOKIE CUTTER

What? Do the correct thing!
When? Do it on time!
Where? Do it in its proper place!
How? Do it well!
Why? Do it the best way!
Who? Cut to fit!

July 1993

CONCATONATIONS

1

it stands perfect in perfect form
each leaf, each branch in its place
it moves, it becomes leaf, tree, forest
of many, of one

2

it's a cafe, a circus of crazy
coffee canaries
information inundation
pink noise, plummeting clouds
scurries of blueberry pie

3

either/or = : but/and
contemplation = : service
inner chatter = : outer voice
disinformatics = : truth decay

4

going too intensely into
one indubitably becomes disappointed
until the experience of ingenuity swells
one's authenticity with hope for humanity

[Note: July-September 1993]

CONCERTO FOR ONE

They danced off the blacks and whites
like a thousand hopping toads on blistering summer
pavement.

An aural feast of cascadeness birthed
from multivariiegated felt-tipped hammers
flooding the room with a symphony. In synchrony with
the jumping light-heartedness of their human creator
locked in jocular animation, ten vivacious fingertips
were
in intercourse with eighty eight keys.

arc
30 March 96
Milano

A MOMENT IN TRUTH, A MOMENT IN TIME

A coating of crusted sleep crumbles before the finger of dawn.

And through the window, the first rays penetrate the blanket of grey resentful consciousness jarred to acknowledge the beginning of a new day.

Again, another stranger from time to beckon without an invitation.

Time to rise to answer the knocks at the door, that hit like the pitter-patter of rain drops rocketted into oblivion.

They announce their arrival saying goodbye.

arc

31 March 1996

Milano

• |

THE IDEA

The owl on the bough stared motionless.
Its eyes speared his soul with silence.

He had ripped through life an unfinished path
dismembering others with zealous rath
totally convinced the idea was true.
Why did they resist? He thought they all knew.

The years had past fast, the carnage had grown.
He had lost count of the dragons he had slain.
His final day had come; it was his moment to know.
He griped his chest, in his last gasp for eternity

the owl on the bough stared motionless.
Its head turned disinterested, away.

arc
1 April 1996
Milano

THE FUTURE WAS THEIRS

The ambience of her way appeared softly from behind
her gossimer veil.

She beckoned him with her smile. The 'light' rain ~ad
washed away

the sins of humankind. The future was theirs.

Hand in hand they meandered in the sun. Their sway
moved in rhythm with the couplets' of.

wild tulleps that spottedly hugged their country road.

They talked of nothing important. They lived to renew
the moist clasp and seamlessness of body pearls

2 April 1996

Milano

ELLUSIVE ELECTRONIC ILLUSIONS

The jazzy tip-toed tones connected our faxes.
We buzzed with excitement, feeling the future
come instantaneously to tingle our union.

arc
6 April 1996
Milano

LUNCH RECESS

In accord we walked, arm and arm from the court.
A moment ago, our vicious words clashed in public
splendor.
But now, we exchanged vows to mock the righteous and
all social vermin
in our most pompous supercilious vain. We extruded
like two cocks
before a hen house our most dignified aplomb, denying
all, but especially
the lowly lining the hallway, acknowledgment of their
existence.
We gesticulated vivaciously, projecting indigenous
straight-jackets for them,
positive utopian television houses of miraculous
unrealistic design.
Though of course they excluded, our two gentile persons
walking, arm and arm.

arc
6 April 1996
Milano

VODKA

She never knew
whether she would find him drunk or sober
when she entered the flat
his sprawl met her.
It was his night before.

Between their words of love and their love of words
they spared no illusions about life.
It was no-life really-in a word
a writer would excavate

until one day she decided to pick them up
but the cover fell off their dieti6fttry.
The dictionary was broken
and thereby, "they" ended-without a word.

[Notes:
Written on Memorial Day in May 1996.]

MOURNING AFTER

Flicker little candle flame
as though your life is through
crying tiny glossy drips
for love you thought you knew

The glow of bluish hues frame
saddened side with waxy dew
until a cup of molten drops
is what remains of you

HOT COLD WAR

We spat forth words with pain
To crush everything like pumice
In our hands porous and inane.

We let our fears and words consume
We walked along the shadow line
In gloom.

We were frightened fully
We traumatized our worlds
The doom makers.

AGAINST THE CURRENT

we danced in-love a dance of love
we danced with the same dancers
in artificial environs and fast-flowing rivers
in-love against the current

we argued, what has always been
steaming hot, cornmeal remnants
molten and moldy, rubbed and raw
exciting, unseemly, would-be exceptionals

ripples in churning fast-flowing rivers
in-love against the current
knowingly going down stream

WIND, TREE AND ROCK

The wind pushed
mightily
so that the tree caressed the rock
but it felt not.

Pity
to be neither
given nor received.

EASTERN EXTREME

She sticks to him like blue flypaper.
The farther he pulls away, the closer she comes.

It's overwhelming like a skyscraper.
They're searching a plate in need of a crum.

DREAMY

Dream lovely thoughts of love
showering flowers from above
a million wishes which express
your never-ebbing happiness '
and ever-lasting memories of
dreaming lovely thoughts of love

NO GOING BACK

There is no return to what was
no going back
no unity tomorrow in our past time
no day forward with no rear view mirror

there is to be what is
imagine what

SUBSTANCE

that which is
between
is more
than that which is
and either

CLOSE

in wet water smooth skin
with warm shadows came
as a vibrant breeze plays
into quiet recesses
waiting in its soft silkiness
in arms gentle

SIMPLE PLEASURES

after years of tasting wisely
a puffy effervescence pervades
the ambience and aura
of one who imbues
the sweet comforts of
banality

FAMILY

We piled into the house
like a rolling thunder of logs
altogether
with our conflicts and chicken pox
after countless exhilarations and disappointments,
but together--
our family,
reigning mightily over
our solitudes and all destructive forces of humanity.

SIERRA MELT

warbling waters cascade over and maneuver through
jumbled over-sized pebbles, milky blue
regal and baffling

vociferous weights break upon the cracked flat
a kaleidoscope of asperity-an odious
sociopathic shattering of tranquil serenity

macho strainers and sieves of turbulence
churn and drop like a hungry carnivore
ripping the flesh from its new kill

an orchestra of interlocutors carried to modicum
through the roar
the burlesque staircase falls away

SURFING THE INTERNET

without regard to your origination of flight
without ruining a perfectly good night
you must enter cyberspace to cleanse your virtuality
massage your process chip
diffuse your silicon soul
aware no longer
of any desire to be free
from your new deepening technological addiction
you consciously voyage into your unconscious
ping-ponging about the electronic envelop
you seemingly swim through the ether
almost effortlessly
eyes married to finger tips
all else disintegrates in the wake of obsession
being in cyberspace, cyberspace is being
feeling free
without cares and responsibilities
nothing else matters~~
its *the* reality

SILENT SENTINELS OF THE SIERRA

As I ascended from the valley
the forest pines and manzanita submitted to
the rising rounded masses.
Huge granite boulders sporadically lined my way.
And near the top of the world
the cracked corrugated cliffs cast their shadow.

Every hundred paces an ancient one stood watch
clothed in rough streaked rust
extended by knarled feet and crooked arms and
zillions of bristly fingers.
They stood in haunting silence at the cliff's edge
peering down
marking my intrusion across the hallow--ed ground
with each step of my boots.

A row of ominous giants they stood
with an unobstructed panoramic view of Lake Tahoe
silent sentinels guarding
guarding the carved crusty path in the mountain side
stretching to the trans-continental trail.

ELECTRIC DEBATE

Cloaked in peaceful appearance
the candidates appeared before
the crowd and television cameras.

With mouths hidden behind many microphones
they took a protective posture
a gesture to secure a chief rival's position
even though they remained divided into
tiny crossroads of 100 miles
of evidence chasing against them.

The rivals met to discuss criticism
to mend their factions in the face of
those who would exploit the occasion
to try to tie some kind of racial motivation
between them

CAPITAL ARROGANCE

Despite an occasional curry favor
he disaffiliated with the sleaze
of the megatropolis machine,
for as a virtuoso of the profane
he was a habitue in lackluster *par excellence*.

His prerogative was without acolytes--
semblances were but encumbrances.

He monitored the gratuitous and hypocritical
and fed it all back to them via selective media
as quirky as he appeared, he notarized
without encroachment his egregious ways.

His egregious ways were instigated and nourished
by the ridicule he received from those who would be king.

It was no miracle therefore his machinations
became a tsunami
that coronated a 48 story skyscraper in the center
of the city with the neon letters of his name.

THE FINE LINE

At 22, caliber crack shot
providing security to hundreds
entering one of his home city's
largest enterprises, he
unavoidably pulled off
the surprise of his uneventful career.
In pursuit of a terrorist
last Thursday fellow officers
killed by friendly flee.
As he lay in a--dark red pool
the pastor passed his hand before
his departing soul.

August 1996

WAITING

Seasoned experience coupled
to deep domestic discontent
exuberated every wrinkle
daunted every moment
of daily routine sustained
the bulk of the twentieth century
mundaned in habit
sobered by disappointment
a million times
a lifetime, saturated
heavy oily stained cloth
waiting

Aug 96

HER PHOTOGRAPH

She lay
in dawn's light before me
tantalizing my mind's eye
across my arm, nestling up against me.
Her long wild hair captured the night

we became
when first we met a decade ago
in her street corner cafe
across a tiny marble table
in the center of the crowd.
We dove helplessly into each other's eyes
two cultures divided, two passions
longing to join

our witness
that was now, the morning air
laden over soaking corn fields.
Its sweeping sweet scent kissed
across my face, arousing me
to appreciative wakefulness
to think about what we might do
this fine silken sky grey day.

Aug 96
Grigno, Italy

YOU ASK TO SHARE

you ask to share with me
one moment of your strappled life
one precious moment where
all thoughts and heartbeats melt
into one glorious irrevocable end--
the suffering and despair
but for that moment resolute
to endure

IN THE GARDEN

Father works now
in the garden
filling in the past
weeding family history
outside in the garden
thoughtfully for Mother

WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG

In their youth they wished change to remain the same.
Being a child-bearer and housewife was a secure post,
as was a clerk with a lunch pail in a government office.
Surrogate parents hung on the wall.
Who would have known anyway how to survive outside?
When young, they could willingly become nobody.
Yes! Those were days to remember.

DEFERENCE

Her desire to make a pleasant life
quite young still after
two years when his problems long-deferred
seemed bargains on the run
forced her to inorganic silence
of the drunkard's wife.

Highest paid her price worst wasted
with vague awfulness translated
to suffering and disappointing habits.
Fullest be her the victim full of
compacted unexpressed hostilities
and unexposed hypocracies
simmering among desiccated fragments
in her littered artificial existence
quite young still after
two years when this problems
seemed bargains on the run.

Is this VODKA presented earlier?

FACING TWILIGHT

We dined this evening, but you were not here.
Your face had set like the late day sun now frank
Every wrinkle glowing like tired polished concrete.

What is with your meandering thoughts these days?
You are off in distant lands on electronic adventures
Swooning in lives, times and places outside yourself.

I miss you when we sit facing twilight.

OTHER PEOPLES PARENTS

Instead of parents falling in love
they fall in love with other lives.
Determined to make the innocent guilty
they spend their children's tomorrows
they wish for letters from friends who care
who had affairs like holes-in-socks but wanting to be
strong persons, sometimes overcoming
inconsistencies and errors.

Instead of parents falling in love
they fall in love with other lives, those
ephemeral whimsies taking them no farther than
the neighborhood grocery and gasoline station.

How long to forgive one for choosing someone else?

IT WAS LIKE PULLING ROOTS

It was like pulling roots
out
to hang up.

Your voice eased, my anguish
events this past week

I long to be with you and float
float away as one
to paradise

FAX

To my surprise, to my delight
with the coming of the night
I found your jovial fax

of precious thoughts considered,
a golden drop of dew delivered,
I cherish you celestial fax.

To moisten the miles that separate
with words of love that intoxicate,
I embrace your aphrodisiacal fax

where every message stirs
swirling the tornado to heaven--
amazing umbilical fax!

SAILOR'S FATE

After heaven's pause on solid soil,
I feel the land-loving sailor cast
Unwillingly out to sea once more.
Now adrift in the nomadic life,
My ship travails off shore.
Your loving only can counterpoint
This sailor's fate be cursed.
But time enough there may be still
For fate to change its course.

EAGLE AND DEER

"If your eyes could only fly to see what I
have seen," said the Eagle to the Deer,
"the world would be firmer
and among all living beings clearer,
real, and complete."

"But oh, my lofty feathered friend,
I must amend," said the Deer to the Eagle.

"If only you could smell and feel
the intricacies in which I must wade
and mend,
among all living things we might better
comprehend.

Therefore, let us join together
our two ways of living
and make a pact that shall perpetuate
our being. "

TODAY IS A STRANGE DAY

Today is a strange day
that is, I have felt very strange all day.

Talking to you on the phone at day's end was
like drinking pure honey from the goblet of
Venus.

The news of the likely demise of an ailing life
long friend
brought the shivering breath from the
shadow of Death.

Hot and cold together, both pleasure and
pain,
salt with pepper, and sunshine in the rain.

A flood of dust, a quiet storm,
a mountain desert, and a stone worm.

Thank goodness for your soothing voice
undulating into easiness my convulsive

5 may 97

ALL TALKING AND GESTICULATING

All talking and gesticulating
employment in the railroad company
for 15 years
promises repromised after repeated
crossings
haggard from rage, delapidating resentment.
once more he sat with her on the side
of the bed
but could not appease
while a door in a second class compartment
of the train
closed her one hope of release, her portal to
paradise,
when he entered his reluctant farewell
with an iron heart,
though she knew and understood, it had
to be his way.
Her swollen crystalline eyes, flooded in alpine
tears
turned to him. They dark spotted his soot
coated
shoes.

[3/94 Rhodos]

HE LISTENS

He listens to the babble
the babbling of, their voices
babbling rivers.

It is daybreak.

The cathedral bell gongs, bobbling
swimming, into the sunshine
like undulating currents
of substance to time.

WALKING LONG

Long am I walking
· a country road with you
walking my thoughts
filling forward
for you, fill my thoughts
a country road's full
walking along side you.

THE DAY

without you
the day
is a void
in a rush

being

with you
the day
is a coming
to a touch

EYES IN THE HEART

wrapped into one warmth and true
the fabric-of embrace
separate or together, we endure
. eyes in the h[~]
the weave of two lives
separate or together, we wake
dreaming to become one again

BEATING OUT LOVE

Her desire to make a pleasant life
quite young after
two years when his problems long-deferred
seemed bargains on the run
forced her to inorganic silence
of the drunkard's wife.

Highest paid her price worst wasted
with vague awfulness translated
to suffering and disappointing habits.
Fullest be her the victim full of
compacted unexpressed hostilities
and unexposed hypocrisies
simmering among desiccated fragments
in her littered artificial existence
quiet young after
two years when his problems
seemed bargains on the run.

LOVING EYES

Dressed up in formal black, white cuff and collar
my gaze combs her hair with a caressing embrace.
She looks up from her book to meet, seconds later,
my approach; her velvet long blond strands shimmer
like a saffron waterfall framing her face.
She whips them carelessly over her shoulder.

Bathing in the music-the fluttering guitar,
my exit from her, for her is unannounced.
She moves, behind the service counter
checking garments in and out.
She smiles, and my face relaxes in her radiant sunshine
and my chest swells with the ache of rejuvenation.

Loving her with my eyes I must do, loving her from afar.
Nothing more is permissible and I can do no less.
My heart jumps in time to the notes of the guitar,
the dance of its melodious strings unite us.
She returns to the apparent diversion of her book,
and I, to the company of my neglected dinner guest.

Dec 95

Park Avenue Restaurant, New York.

BLESSED THOUGHTS MISTAKEN

Virtue is silent
and Time, simplicity.

Far better it is to be still, still as the lull of the Night;
still as the gentle murmur of the brook,
taking Time to bathe souls pure who have given.

Though you yearn for Love and Hate
from one who seemed to invite both,
Fate has chosen us for another near
long before our eyes dove into each other.

In the passing of the Seasons, join you I can
but not in your Calling, as Silence longs for Virtue
and Simplicity seeks out Time
for your blessed thoughts mistaken.

SHE

she walked
 beside the picket fence.
a flickering light.

a thousand pictures of manner in motion
projecting
who she is
 and what she will become.

Feb 82

BELLALICA

Pumpkin-headed
& bottomed
like a hellalica
she blinded him to
love her too long
though he tried to
fiddle her strings
among other things
& placate her blues
seriatum.

WERE THEY EVER?

Once he knew about them
he wanted to be between them.
When she became ill, they Qecame.ill
when she decided for them . ' . .
that he would nurse her back.
And thereby
he came between them
and they became she and he.
Were they ever?

TRIANDIA

They found him dying
the crowd of boys lying
their eyes blinked
rapidly with disbelief.

She seized a free handful of pebbles
watching ever vigilant their movements--
herd of frightened goats
about to buck.

She pulled herself together upright.
The wet blush hand on her hip
alone and glazed -
shimmering in the moonlight.

Blood clotted his hair.
Her hand glued to the tumbler-the
instrument of death.

Suddenly the boys broke like a water front
to where his boat was moored.
How dazed the boys appeared.

He lay dying in a pool
while silken ribbons slapped the shore.

Note: 3-94 Rhodes

WHERE IN THE SCHOOL WERE THEY?

The stick struck the blackboard in a regular rhythm
The teacher surveyed them
 like a vulture hovering over carrion.

Where in the school were they?
What book were they in?

He was quiet, seemingly unconscious
 a million miles away
He was the victim of a plot to save money at his
 parents expense
The young man bicycled to school regularly every day
The teacher he thought a deplorable figure
 long overdue for retirement.

Where in the school were they?
What book were they in?

The principal looked into the accounts to declare
 there was nothing wrong
His class consisted of 5 young men and 10 young ladies
 of various tastes and tongues
The teacher would carry on with a tap ... tap ... tap
He loved his hard working father
He adored his devoted mother.

Where in the school were they?
What book were they in?

He longed to wake up, stand up from his desk,
and walk out of his book,
He was proud, he longed to be free
without the arrogant smugness choking him .
Where in the school were they?
What book were they in?

Note: 3-94 Rhodes

LONELY HEART

He thinks he is an ace in the deck
He can't recall how many times
He's been dealt
He hopes his luck will pan out
He gets another face down
He gets another show down
He gets his pockets hung out
He's seen countless hands .
He's an old sharpie's glove
He discards again and again
He thinks he can make it a pair
He thinks he can make it a straight
He thinks to make a full house
He thinks he wants a flush, but
He's the lonely heart in the deck
He knows no other game in town
He plays on and on, his table of despair

11-81

THE MAN AT OREGON AND GROVE

Every day he greets me at Oregon and Grove.
Sweet brown chocolate, white gloves waving
 smiling
 to commuters under the foggy morning
 a spotlight of cheer.

He waves.
 He smiles, an exuberant smile
 a well-wishing giving man.

Every day he greets me at Oregon and Grove.
 in the rush
 a pause to slow motion.

He points to me, he waves to me
 his innocence and sincerity
 my lost humanity.

I wave, and smile.

[Note: 1983. In honor of Thomas Charles, a kind of street person, before there were officially recognized street people, who stood on his front steps and in front of his house every morning for many years, wearing white gloves and waving at passing motorists. He lived at the corner of Oregon and Grove Streets (the latter now called Martin Luther King, Jr.) in Berkeley, California.]

A STANZA TO LOVE

Two flamingos neck
Enfolding inter-slide
Their swooning beaks
To encapsulate their fate

No distance can diminish
The warmth of two
Who lie in
the arms of love

No seam can part
The threads of love that weave
The lives of two hearts
To one cloth

No breeze can blow to bits
Two blending -spirits
That swirl in love
To one vivacious space

No fist can break.
The bonds that make -
Two loving souls
One heart

No Canyon can breach
The depths to which
Two lives in love
Converge

No knife can cut
The cords that tie
Two true in love's
Eternal embrace

Two eagles soar
Their cries connect
Their encircling love
To intertwine their make