



CLASS!!

POEMS BY  
**GARRETT STONE**

# **A Touch Of Class**

Tyler's Toybox  
Volume One

Poetry

By

**Garrett Stone**

Unpublished Edition  
Written and created for personal use,  
and distribution to only the finest people,  
and the closest of friends and family.

By Garrett T. Stone  
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and events are either works of the author's imagination, based  
on his own experiences, or are used fictitiously.  
Furthermore, all names have been changed, not to protect the innocent,  
because I don't write about anyone innocent, but  
to protect ME from the wicked and the litigious.

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There wasn't ten years ago, either.  
Those bastards have something against me.

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care about, respect, enjoy the company of, or  
have otherwise impressed me hold these few copies.  
I expect you to be kind, as this is some VERY old stuff in here.  
Relatively speaking.

**To the place that caged me and gave me nothing to do but right,  
and nobody to talk to but myself.  
Just a few less rednecks, a few more dates with a few more girls  
worth knowing,  
and who knows where I'd be today.**



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## Introduction

The Tyler's Toybox books are something that have been long in coming. Originally conceived of years ago, they are collections of the poetry and short pieces I wrote before writing the first novel. Literally the trail of words that led from the first time I picked up a pen and paper to write something because I WANTED to, and not because I had to, to the moment I sat down at my laptop in a small studio apartment in a seedy, run-down building and ended up with a finished book before I even knew what was happening. The collections have been sitting on backup disks and that same laptop, long dead, for years, compiled together and edited (if poorly), hidden away until now. When I was preparing them, initially, I was uncertain about how they fit in with me and my life, and so introduced the volumes under the pseudonym Tyler Jackson. Since so much of this seems like much longer ago than it was, and because I have changed so much between then and now, I am leaving the names as they are.

In our first volume, we're going to go way back, to a time before I ever thought I would be spending even a fraction of the time I do writing. After discovering that I enjoyed the literature of Hemmingway and Steinbeck more than I had enjoyed reading anything since the legends and myths that I read more than six years before, realizing how well I did at writing assignments, and how much I thought about poetry afterwards, I decided to give it a shot. So it was that, one day, in a math class that I used mostly for naptime, I started with a mechanical pencil and a loose sheet of paper what would be my first poem. It was absolute crap, and not even this volume will hold it. But it felt good to write, and I found myself spending less of my time drawing and napping, and more of it writing. I wonder what I'd have thought if I realized how much writing I would do by this point, ten years later. A lot of it is a little rough, most of it coming from a time before I was in college, as I tested myself to find a voice. I believed, and still do, that I had to stick very closely to formal poetry styles and rhyming schemes at first, until I could prove myself in them, and move on. Too many people put pen to paper, coming up with terrible poetry they try to pass off as style, because they are too lazy to learn what they're doing before they try and cash in on doing it. I always hated that kind of poetry, as well as that kind of poet. I still do. They are pathetic, and a more than usually soft in the head. If you see one, bash them with something. But first, enjoy the beginnings of a very devoted relationship with words.

~Garrett Stone



*Message of the Heart*

To me you are so wonderful,  
    I hope that you can see.  
I never thought such a special girl  
    possibly could be,  
When I think of you I hope and pray  
    that you and I could merge.  
For you have already given me  
    strength, joy, and courage.

You've helped me fight and overcome  
    some of my greatest fears.  
And with the strength you gave to me,  
    I shed those pent-up tears.  
Mental walls that I have build  
    all came crumbling down;  
And I have mostly you to thank  
    for the joys that I have found.

I see it all in my mind;  
    a thousand times the same.  
Your beautiful face, your sparkling smile,  
    your sweet sounding name.  
I see your eyes, so soft and bright;  
    capable of no harm.  
Oh, how I wish I could be with you,  
    and hold you in my arms.

So I write here in this poem  
    a message just for you;  
And let me state and reassure  
    that all you read is true.  
You've done so much to give me hope;  
    to give my life a start.  
No matter what becomes of us,  
    you'll always be in my heart.

## **Blind**

What am I to be?

What have the stars in store for me?

What do they want me to do?

Am I here for life or just to serve you?

Am I some protector, in case of a crisis?

Sitting on hand to answer the cries?

And I just another psychiatric case?

Living a life full of insane waste?

And I just a nerd to be an office slave?

Held by chains of money and told to behave?

Or will I die as gutter trash?

Maimed and marred by an alcoholic lash?

Perhaps I'm supposed to write and teach?

Helping everyone within my reach?

Or should I worry about helping myself?

Climb over dead bodies to get the top shelf?

Why doesn't some spirit send me a clue I can find?

Or must I live my life always blind?

**Want**

I want to give up  
I want to let go  
I want to turn my back on me  
And all the troubles I know

I want life to be fair  
But it just isn't so  
I want truth to prevail  
Over a world that is faux

I want to start over  
A new status quo  
To keep clean and cheerful  
And let happiness grow

I want to retreat  
Where the darkness won't show  
I want to stare down my fears  
And tell them to go

*Please*

Please let me find my love  
Bless me with angles from above  
I want so bad to feel cared for  
And to have someone to love and adore  
I wish to hold a body soft  
A thought I've felt I know not how oft  
A set of lips so red, just to kiss  
And if she went away I surely would miss  
I look around and its beauty I see  
All of which are too good for me  
Feeling like my heart will cave in  
Punished with this cold for some unknown sin  
Bound and chained to a heart of stone  
Dark and shivering and very alone  
Dreams that I have to be with beauties around  
Are only dreams, no such thing to be found  
What would it take to be good enough for them?  
To deserve to hold such a beautiful gem?  
Alas, I feel so weak and so dead  
And broken-hearted wishes fill my head  
A feeling in my soul not worth a dime  
I fear I shall remain alone for all time

## Confused

Unspoken laws that I know are true  
    Are broken by uncontrolled thoughts;  
Leaves me a void of what I should do  
    When the answer is something I fought.

Certain things just never should be  
    They're wrong in a great many ways,  
But my heart has forsaken me  
    And left me here in a daze.

These people who dance and flail about  
    In an attempt to greater our cheer.  
They're giddy and loud and they whine and pout;  
    Their minds are never too clear.

Somehow one of them broke past their bound  
    Of the disgust and lack of respect.  
Into a world, where as stupid as it sounds,  
    My heart has tried to connect.

An emotion for a person I should distrust  
    Creates confusion like no other.  
My heart of steel has begun to rust  
    Because its wrong, and could cost me a brother.

**Brain Fart**

I cannot think  
    My mind just wanders  
Time crawls by  
    wastes and squanders  
Can't think to write  
    my brain *is an abyss*  
Only thing in me head  
    are thoughts of Alice  
So happy with her  
    that's new to me  
I'm better now  
    I'm content just to be  
Those thoughts repeating  
    bounce off the wall of my mind  
No matter where I search  
    empty space is all I find  
Everything's gelled over  
    inside my skull  
Feels so empty  
    yet crammed so full  
However it happened  
    I'm glad to be happy  
But I wish this poem  
    didn't sound so crappy

## *A Dozen Roses and a Lonely Heart*

Among all the firsts I've encountered in life, homecoming of my sophomore year was one of the most memorable, and most devastating. It was my first dance, my first date, and the first time I was forced to realize the result of a lack of social skills. Normally, I didn't care in the least about school dances. They were a collection of pathetic high school kids trying to be romantic, and hoping to look important. The thought never crossed my mind about going, until one day in English class. I was sitting, listening to some music and writing poems, as usual, when Alice came up to me and asked if she could talk to me about homecoming. My first thought was that she was going to ask me to go, but that was short-lived. She told me that Shauna wanted to go, but nobody had asked her yet. She thought it would be a good thing if I asked her. I said I would try, and started to think.

Shauna Greene was someone who had been in my classes since I moved to Washougal. I had a crush on her in fifth grade, and thought about her on and off after that. She was someone I definitely respected, and the more I thought about it, the more I liked her. That day, after school, I hunted her down, and asked her if she'd like to go with me. She smiled, and said yes. I was both pleased, and confused. At that point, I had wanted to go as more than friends, but I didn't know how she took it. Brian told me that if she suggests we do something before then, she thought of me as more than a friend too. Two days later, she asked me if I'd go to youth group with her. That, in a way, confused me further, because I had no idea if going to church counted as doing something together, or if it was just another church recruitment. Either way, against my better judgment, I went to church with her. Thinking back now, that whole night of church was pretty funny. I walked down to the church, and started to go in, but then got a little scared. I stood outside the church, staring up at it for fifteen minutes, because I was half convinced that I would burst into flames when I stepped inside. I might have stood out there all night, if someone hadn't seen me and brought me in. Then, when I was in, rather than feeling secure I felt like my life was in danger, and instead of sitting and thinking about the holy word of God, I thought impure things about the girl who was sitting to my left.

After what felt like both a short time and forever, it was over, and I left; I was never so happy to breathe outside air again as that. I went home, no less confused than when I left, but happy at spending quality time nonetheless. Homecoming night snuck up on me faster than I had hoped, and there I was, tossed into a situation in which I had no clue what to do. I tried to make conversation, which was difficult because I was scared, and wasn't sure what I was supposed to say. We picked up Dalene (whose date was Shauna's brother), and went to dinner. Personally, I eat most of my meals in the privacy of my bedroom, and almost all of them alone. I had no idea how uncomfortable it was to eat at a restaurant; almost every dish contained meat, even the salad cost thirteen dollars, and everyone sat and watched each other eat. I was very tense, and I think the only thing that helped me loosen up at all was Dalene, because Shauna was being very cold and reserved during all of dinner. So we sat, and made small talk, for about two hours, and then left for the dance.

When we got to the dance, Shauna and I went directly to the picture line. After a lot of waiting, we got our picture taken, and went to the dance floor. As the name implies, people dance on the dance floor, and even though the name gives a good description of what dance floors are for, I had no idea what to do. The only thing close to a dance I had ever been to was at an Adventures in Science and Art camp, and what I did wasn't dancing. After getting less than 6 hours sleep over two nights, I got hopped up on candy, and made spastic motions. When it came to the slow dances, I sat on a bench and watched. The only reason I had any experience with slow dancing at all is because I demanded Brian show me how a few nights before. But that only helped me during slow songs. The rest of the time, we wandered around, talking to various people here and there. Once every so often, Shauna would wander off for some time, and then eventually find me again somewhere near where I was.

During the entire time we were at the dance, I only danced with her twice. The first time I tried to say something romantic like "you look very beautiful tonight," and "I really am glad we came together," which I don't think went over too well. Finally, we decided to get some ice cream, go back to Shauna's house, and watch McHale's Navy. I had watched the same movie twice the day before, and had about as much interest in it as Shauna did in me, which was, sadly enough, very little. I was extremely tired,

and there are only three things that I remember thinking while I was sitting there. I remember thinking that I really wished we got some kind of ice cream that wasn't Napoleon. I remember thinking it was really weird that while everyone started out with a date we were all sitting in different corners of the room. I remember thinking that Dalene looked really beautiful after she had fallen asleep.

I realized after I had gotten some sleep that I hadn't been very outgoing during the entire night, and I felt terrible about that. One day when I was going for a walk, I had an idea. I would let Shauna know that I really did care, and was sorry, by sending her flowers. So I walked to the florist, and ordered her a dozen roses. I also sent a letter apologizing and telling her I really did have a good time, and a poem which I wrote for her long before, but was too nervous to give her. The next day at school, she got them, and I thought they went over very well. That same night, I called her and asked her out. I was shot down with no mercy. Needless to say, I was crushed, but I knew it was my own fault. After that time, I thought about her now and then, and occasionally toyed with the idea of trying to make things better, or asking her out again, but I never acted on those impulses. I learned much, but even as naive as I was I knew when to let a dead dog lie.

*My Demons*

(with apologies to Robert Louis Stevenson)

I have these little demons that walk around with me,  
They're big and tall and nasty, but only I can see.  
They exist only to bother me, and to get in my head;  
I don't think they'll ever stop, unless, of course, I'm dead.

The scariest thing about them is the things that they know-  
All of my worst fears are theirs to flaunt and show;  
And sometimes they'll follow me and expose me to them all,  
Or show me the thing that I fear most as I walk down the hall.

No one around can see  
    That they taunt me through the day,  
All I can do is sit and think  
    And try to wish them away.  
I wish that one day, someone will help me  
    and then shall be free,  
Making all those twisted thoughts run and flee,  
    As I watch and laugh merrily.

Until that golden day arrives when they will stop abrupt,  
I will sit and listen to the stories they make up.  
All the tiny lies that are piled up in my head,  
Filling me with doubt and making me wish that I were dead.

**Hope You're Happy**

(with apologies to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Listen, morons, and you shall see  
How foolish your society be  
A mass of people who push and crowd  
Whine and complain and get far too loud  
And try to ignore it happily.

You tell each other pathetic lies,  
About all your thoughts and cares.  
You sit idly by as your best friend dies,  
And try to secure your shares.  
To get power you lie and cheat,  
For riches you kiss another man's feet.  
Prepared to set your soul on the line,  
And if it need be you'd gladly take mine.  
You wallow in your filth like fat little swine.

Betrayal and deceit; in both you excel,  
You built yourself a personal hell  
Selfishness has cast you a life  
Back-stabbing has left you alone with your knife.  
Living in fear like a rightly-named coward  
Solitude is a bitter reward.  
It's all because of your love for your horde  
Enjoy your riches, and try not to drown  
Now that you found your wealth, is it a let down?

### **Father Time**

Father Time is a sneaky old coot,  
Looking for some cheap kicks.  
Always getting underfoot  
And playing dirty tricks

He may stalk up with silent grace  
And make your life fly by.  
He could set your day at a slow pace  
Leaving you bored with a sigh.

Yes, Father Time is a weird one for sure;  
And you may not understand his way,  
But it's best you enjoy his presence,  
For someday he'll go away.

*Lie to Myself*

Things that I can never have  
Tease as they surround  
They slash at me with bitter cold  
And the pain they cause is unbound

Life has become a barren plain  
And I a bleached man of bones  
A skeleton hollow of all life  
No strength to voice my moans

Sitting out amongst the stars  
Losing track of who is me  
My soul is such a petty thing  
Where the lights can stretch so free

I cannot be the things I wish  
Because I am still a ghost  
Alone save for the wicked voice  
To which I have become host

I'll probably never see the life  
Of which I've always dreamed  
I can at least learn to live alone  
And tell myself that life's not as good as it seemed

### *He's Thinking of You*

He remembers you from when he was young  
The first time your allure had stung  
Sitting at a table, looking at you  
How strongly you'd do the things that you do  
Never one to shy from speaking your mind  
Sharing the knowledge of all that you find  
Remarkable to the very last  
Always have been through the past  
Talking to a hollow chair  
Who never acknowledged that you were there  
Wanted to talk and hear your voice  
Failed to act when he had the choice  
Slink back into the shadows to hide  
Instead of acting on impulses from deep inside  
Years passed by as you grew further away  
Yet he wanted you closer every day  
Then he got a change to show his care  
Cleaned up, got a job, and cut his hair  
But he gave into fear, and made a mistake  
Not thinking at the time about the toll it would take  
He tried to show you how great you are  
He would go with you anywhere, near or far  
The damage was done, though, and you turned him down  
Lost to the most wonderful girl in that town  
He cried for a while, and tried to move on  
Pretending that all those feelings were gone  
In his soul he knew what he wanted  
He tried to tell you, but the reminders taunted  
Not wanting to become a pest  
He held it in, and let it rest  
And when they resurfaced, he wrote all his words  
Pages and poems; the brainchildren of nerds  
Through it all his feelings have been the same  
His heart and mind soar at the sound of your name  
Sara the beautiful, the angel on earth  
The wonder whose power has undeniable girth  
You mean so very much to him  
Always brighten his life, no matter how dim  
You made him want to ease other's strife  
He hopes you'll always be in his life

**Would You Change?**

If you could live your life again  
are there things you'd change?  
Would you take away all the pain  
or give your mind a wide range?

Would you try to live free of tears  
and not worry about tomorrow?  
Would you block off your fears  
and ignore your pain and sorrow?

Would you try to keep it clean  
free your body and soul of sin?  
Ignore all the joys of being a teen  
to be simple and pure within?

Would you fight for what you believe  
and speak what's on your mind?  
Would you defy all the words you receive  
and leave others' thoughts behind?

Would you change who you are  
and the lessons you have learned,  
Or would you accept your life so far  
and receive the reward you've earned?

**Live and love**

You'll want to scream and shout  
And throw objects about,  
You'll try to tear your insides out.

You'll moan and sigh,  
You'll weep and cry,  
You'll wish you could die.

You'll live with the pain,  
You'll swear you won't let it begin,  
And then you'll do it all over again.

[The girl this story was written about once stumbled across it while looking through a folder of my writings. I had no idea it was in there, and she said nothing about it until later. Overall, in the long list of people reading things they think are about them, whether right or not, this was the most pleasant. Not only did she enjoy the story, but some of these things were news to her. If only more reactions were so pleasant.]

### **My First Girlfriend, and the Art of Letting Go**

I doubt that there's a single guy who ever went through high school and didn't have at least one impure thought about a cheerleader. Many have dreamed of going out with one. Myself, well, my first girlfriend was a cheerleader. Her name was Alice Sanders, and she was one of the last people I would have ever thought I'd get together with, and yet, I did. I didn't really see it coming, I didn't know what to do about it, and I didn't expect it to end like it did, but I did learn from it.

I'm not entirely sure when exactly it happened that I started having feelings for her. As far as I can tell, it happened while I was a counselor at Outdoor School, at the very beginning of my sophomore year, or maybe a little before. A week or so before school started, we had a counselor meeting, to choose cabins and table partners, and to learn about our teaching areas. When everyone was choosing partners, Alice asked Brian if he wanted to be her partner, but he already had one. Since I was sitting right there, I was her second choice. Even though Brian thought it was funny that I was stuck with her, I remember feeling a little excited feeling deep down. Well, time passed, and before long we were all at camp, taking care of our little demons. Being a counselor was a rather lonely business, because all day long, you have very little contact with people who you can have real conversations with. Occasionally you get some time in your cabins with other counselors, but you're usually either too busy to enjoy any conversation, or too tired to even know if you're talking. That's why meal time became so important; it was a break, three times a day, in which you could sit calmly, and talk with another real human being. Therefore, for the week of that camp, Alice was my only real conversation. She was pretty, had incredible eyes, and more importantly, she had been very nice to me, which is

something that didn't happen often, and as a result, I developed a crush of sorts on her. I grew to look forward to mealtimes, just so I could talk to her. I recall one occasion in which she was washing the table, and from where I was sitting, I could see down her shirt. I thought that was a great thing, until I noticed two things: One, my little kids could see what I could see, and two, it made her feel really bad when she realized what they were looking at. I felt terrible, and I finished the tables (in fact, I was the only one who washed tables after that), and later disciplined my children. That was the point in which I realized I had some feelings for her, because it was very uncharacteristic for me to have much pity for others when they felt embarrassed.

Camp came to a conclusion, and we all went home with a lot of memories, a lot of headaches, and I also had a new feeling. The feeling came with a problem I didn't expect though. I was the kind of guy who hated pep assemblies, and cheerleaders. I, along with most of my friends, thought that they were a waste of time, and their only purpose was to make jocks horny. But Alice, this new infatuation of mine, was a cheerleader. So I should hate her, like the others, only I didn't, I thought she was great. That thought stopped me from pursuing anything, so I sat, and watched her, and let my feelings fester. Sometime in February I admitted to my best friend Brian how I felt. He didn't approve by any means, and talked me out of doing anything for her on Valentine's Day, and as ended up getting the bear and box of chocolates I bought her to give to his own girlfriend. My feelings won out, though, and I asked her to go to the Days of the New concert on the twenty-seventh with me. Much to my surprise, she wanted to go, and we talked on the phone for hours. I had never guessed that she would be interested in me, and was so happy that I couldn't wait until the night of the concert to see her. The following day there was a school dance, which I knew she would be at with her friend, and I decided to stop by and surprise her. Surprised she was, too, when I tapped on her shoulder and said hello.

That evening we spent a lot of time together dancing, talking, and walking around. I went home and immediately began planning to ask her out, making arrangements in my head. The next day was a Sunday, and I did something I had never done before: I woke up before eight o'clock. I walked around town, trying to find a floral shop that was open, and bought a cute little stuffed seal. My plan was to give her the seal holding a bouquet of

flowers, and ask her to go out with me, but I was thwarted. There wasn't a single florist open on Sunday; I would be forced to do it sometime during the school day on Monday. Luckily, she had a fifth period band class, which mean she was at school for eighty minutes after I got out. Normally, eighty minutes would be more than enough time to go home, go to a florist, and get back to school before she left, only I had to do it on foot. It was a mile from my house to school, a mile and a half from my house to the florist, and two miles back to the high school, so I literally had to run. I was never very good at running, but I did my best. I jogged home, dropped off my backpack, grabbed the seal, sprinted to the florist, bought a half dozen roses, had them put the flowers and the seal together, and walked as fast as I could back tot he high school and not ruin the flowers. In my haste, I was a full ten minutes early, and I used that time well, to get my hair in place, make sure I wasn't sweating, think about what I would say, and pat myself on the back for making it in time.

The school bell rang, the door to the band room opened, and out came Alice with her good friend. She froze when she saw me standing there, with my gift in my arms, and needed her friend to give her a little push in my direction. As she approached, my head was buzzing with excitement, and trying to remember to not do anything stupid. Yet as nervous as I was, I remember it all very clearly. I stood tall, handed her the flowers, and said "Alice, I think you're a wonderful person, and I would be both thrilled and honored if you would go out with me." She smiled the biggest smile I had ever seen, and practically lunged into my arms. Truthfully, I was so nervous that I almost fell over when she hugged me. She told me she would love to, and that she would call me. Even though I was starving and exhausted, I strut all the way back home again.

The night of the concert came, and everyone gathered at my house. For about a half hour, I had an image which still makes me glow inside. I was sitting in my room, with my black-light on, and my girlfriend right beside me. Over in one corner my good friend Brody plucked away at his guitar, and in another my best friend was standing, holding his girlfriend. I was so happy and at peace I'll never forget it. We went to the show, and when we got there, we all went our separate ways. Brody ran off with some friends ripping posters of the wall, Brian and his girl went into the mosh pit, and Alice and myself were left standing in the middle of

the floor, talking. I had envisioned my first kiss many times, and it was always someplace quiet, private, and usually dark. I never expected it would be in the middle of a brightly lit, crowded room waiting for a band to come on stage. And now, I never would have had it any other way.

Things went good, and I spent as much time with her as I could for the next two weeks. I was excited, because the fifth was my birthday, and we made plans to go to see Good Will Hunting and go to dinner on the sixth. It was supposed to be one of the best days of my life. In the morning, when I visited her in the chemistry room before class, I noticed something felt different. When she hugged me, it felt like goodbye. I worried over it all morning, until I got to see her again in English class. She met me at the door, and told me I should sit down. She said she was sorry, and she really thought I was a great person, but she wasn't ready for a relationship at that time in her life. I was crushed. I remember smiling, and telling her I understood, and then putting my headphones on, and playing the Foo Fighters as loud as I could to keep me from crying. It should have ended that day, and it probably would have been best if it had, but it didn't.

She had been my first girlfriend, and I refused to accept that it was over. Not so soon, and not before I was through. I wrote poem after poem expressing how I felt, but it didn't help. After about a month, I asked her if we could get back together again, and she said I was really sweet, but she couldn't. She said she wasn't don't going to games and flirting with people at other schools, and she said that as soon as she was ready for a relationship, she would tell me. It gave me something to shoot for. Before too long, I decided I would try to be charming again. I went and got three fire and ice roses, tucked in a letter saying I would wait for her forever, and waited outside my locker, which I knew she would have to pass. When she came out of her math class, I asked if I could talk to her for a second. When she came over to my locker, I opened it, and gave her the flowers. I told her "You're the one that taught me about the meanings of the colors of roses, and that's why I chose these. They say everything I feel about you. The red for passion, the pink for love, and the white for purity." Her big, gorgeous eyes got misty, and she told me that no matter what happened, I was the nicest, sweetest guy she'd ever met. Later that day, she called me and said she didn't plan on ever being in love until after she was in college, and she didn't think

shed ever be ready for what I wanted anytime soon. It was still hard for me to give up.

During the summer, I finally succeeded in getting over her. Music is very important to me, and I had always wanted to be able to take her to see her favorite band, the Steve Miller Band. I heard they were playing in Portland, so the day tickets went on sale I went and bought her two front row center seat tickets. I wrote a letter telling her I was sorry I drew things out so long, but she really was special. I told her I hoped everything went well with her life, and she got everything shed ever wanted out of it, then I tucked in the tickets, and sent it out in the mail that very day. For some reason, after that I found it easy to let go. Maybe it was just that it had been months since she dumped me, or maybe it was the gift, but I no longer had any desire to be with her. I did remember everything she meant to me once, though, and learned a lot from the whole experience.

*The Tick of a Clock*

Sitting in my room  
Watching the clock tick by  
Staring at the stars  
And wishing I could die.

Colors flash by  
As I hear an old song  
My memory must be going;  
It never sounded so long.

My mind flashed forward  
To somewhere I want to go  
Suddenly I feel so stuck  
And time passes oh-so slow.

Why can't everything move on  
And let me live my dreams?  
Will two years pass quickly,  
Or slower than it seems?

### *Thank You*

Shimmering reflection in a pool of gold;  
A beautiful view of what once seemed old.  
Full of life and spirit reborn;  
Far past the darkness and shadows' scorn.  
Free from the solitude and loneliness chains;  
And laughing in the face of past's brutal pains.  
Soaring above all and outshining the sun:  
Thankful and thrilled that a new life's begun.  
A path never taken but watched from below;  
Full of new things, feelings anxious to know.  
Pleasures discovered where none was before;  
Things long looked upon as legends and lore,  
But now all of this is known to me, too,  
All thanks in full to a very special you.

## Society

Herds of sweaty, smelly, hairless creatures  
Stumbling around on an asphalt world,  
Following each other like mindless lemmings  
Marching to doom and a self-made death.  
They see, yet are blind, as they run  
Searching for something to hold on to as  
They trample true beauty as though it was nothing.  
Nothing but an insect.  
No respect for life or love;  
Only a maladjusted ideal of what  
They are, and what they should be.  
Their way is the only way, the only answer.  
Fighting, yelling, scratching; hating they stumble  
Around in a dark world of man-made  
Misery, pollution, and death until they fall,  
One by one, under the heels of the others;  
Their "friends," and "family."  
They live as one, they think as one,  
They die as one.

**Frightened**

Frightened.

Scared.

Terrified.

What could be so horrible, to scare someone so much?

Monsters?

Death?

Things that go bump in the night?

Worse. It's a dream.

A nightmare.

A feeling so lonely and so cold

it could bring a giant to his knees.

A fear of being alone.

Alone for another day,

Another year,

Another lifetime.

Never to know love,

Or even human touch.

Nothing could be more terrible than this.

### *Child*

Alone in a corner the young man sat  
Wondering when or where he was at.  
Surrounded by pain, dark and black  
His soul's been strung up on a rack.  
Nothing inside; he's empty and cold  
Merely a boy, yet he feels so old.  
Life's left him stranded, joy passed him on by  
The poor lad hasn't even the strength to cry.  
Abandoned of love, with no reason for hope  
But through all the bleakness he's learned to cope.  
Just sit and think, focus on each breath  
And wait until, at last, you're freed by death.

## *Insane*

Locked away with nary a hope  
Tied and bound in black, painful rope  
Searching for help, in the darkness you grope.

Looking for things that you'll never find  
Running and stumbling from an evil close behind  
Nothing is real; it's all in your mind.

You kick and you scream and you try to get free  
Fighting in terror against things only you see  
Huge bloody monsters bring you to your knee.

The battle is lost as you bleed in the rain  
Nobody sees what has caused all the pain  
They just laugh at your words and call you insane.

*The Path Awaits*

Fear inside of future days,  
Paths detour from decent ways,  
Barriers emerge transforming road to maze,  
And darkness falls creating shadowy haze.

Torch burning bright, glowing and wise,  
Luminance flickers off tear-filled eyes,  
With the crackling fire, spirit does rise,  
And with every step a mystery dies.

Long is the trail of the unknown,  
Around every corner; images shown,  
Into the wind ignorance is thrown,  
Surrounded by life, but walking alone.

Time passes by, the soul does age,  
Things come and go like turning a page,  
The trail passes on the wisdom of a sage,  
Long lasting scars from years of rage.

Resting at last on a soft bed of grass,  
A reward fit after a long, hard past,  
Troubles behind are many and vast,  
Peace, love, and empathy have come at last.

### *The Path's End*

Forgotten dreams of marvelous wealth;  
Looking to times of energy and good health.  
Hoping for fortune and happiness pure;  
Asking for strength to ignore evil's lure.  
Wishing on every star that streaks past;  
Searching the soul for some peace at last.  
Heading towards a beacon in the night;  
Cutting through shadows in heavenly flight.

Paths open up heading over the horizon;  
Leading, perhaps, to the goal you've got eyes on.  
Running at times to meet it's end soon;  
Lying for rest under a bright summer moon.  
Looking ahead to whatever awaits;  
Shining with joy when the fog abates.  
Feeling friends long gone and the love that they send;  
Enjoying the serenity of a well-deserved end.

[Steven Jesse Bernstein is one of the greatest writers in recorded history. He had incredible talent, and insight, and has been a personal inspiration to me. His style was fast and choppy and raw, like pure thought, in a way that made you out of breath just to read it, and made your heart beat faster with the intensity of it. I have always respected all of his works, and loved most of it; especially his spoken word pieces. I carry a poem of his around in my courier bag everywhere I go, even today. Thank you, Jesse.]

### *Tribute to Jesse*

I was sitting there, staring at the screen. clickity, clickity click, and I noticed something: a lump, a small painful lump, by my ear. Not the first time its happened of course, but frustrating nonetheless. It grew, and grew, with the stress in my head, expanding with ever pounding waves of heartache and depression and boredom and stress. Larger and larger, until it burst, drowning me in thoughts. Swirling brownish liquid the color of blood and shit mixed together poured out, around me, smelling much like blood and shit. Probably was. The blood of my soul, the desires for contact, the need for human touch, the sweet feeling of flesh and lips and love, the thirsts for art, for love, for music, for all the things that make life living blended in with the shit of the world, of my own mind, the troubles, the nightmares, the violence, the painpainpain cascading out like the fucking Niagra Falls, smashing hopes and dreams on the rocks below. And as the sticky, fetid smelling liquid rose around my neck, I gasped for air, before being sucked under, into the darkness below, where you couldn't even see the colors of the thoughts and the very thing drowning you, it was only black, black as a devils heart, as death itself, black, surrounding me, eating alive what's left of my soul, my dreams, me. Gnawing and chewing and digesting me, only to eat me again, continuing, a never ending circle of being eaten and shat out again, mixing in with my own sea of blood-shit waters, becoming one of them, another swirl of color in a never-ending sea. Drowning. Dying. And washed up on the shores again, found by an old man, in rags, searching for a quarter, a bottle, a seashell, anything that's beautiful, to bring him out of his own dark clouded life, with the smog in the air, and the needles and garbage strewn all over the beach as he pick through, crying, searching, stopping every so

often to pick up something glimmering only to toss it down again in disdain. And as the old man slaps me awake, shaking the death from my lungs, he whispers something about the blackness of the weather, and the stormclouds in my eyes, but I cannot really hear him anymore. I just stare, facing the mid-day sun, cracked and bleeding, and bring my hand to my ears, to wipe away what's left of the thoughts with my clammy hands, and wipe them on my jeans, and go back to typing, clicking on the keys, making note of every breath, ever glimmer of thought, ever waking dream and nightmare, until the waters from inside my mind build up again, and the floodgates swell and open and release them to start the circle over again.

## Wake

A lingering dream of being warm;  
Held and comforted; safe from all harm.  
Loved deeply and true by someone unknown;  
A feeling of peace going straight to the bone.  
Her soft lips made the world disappear;  
A crystalline voice was all I could hear.  
Laughing together all the day through.  
Being together; so much we could do.  
Never a doubt about what was right;  
Looking up to the stars all night.  
Twinkles reflecting off soft, bright eyes,  
Her spirit soaring across the skies.  
Love so strong it could make the earth shake.  
Why did I ever have to wake?

*Dreamer*

Far below the glimmering shine  
    Life and love provide.  
Seeming it will never be mine,  
    From this I am outside.

Starving, cold, and all alone;  
    Shut out from the world.  
A self-imposed solitude,  
    Where hopes become unfurled.

I wish that could be in love,  
    And live like in my dreams.  
I pray for help from above;  
    Though unheard, so it seems.

Someday, perhaps, I will be free;  
    Having learned from sorrows past.  
But what ever may occur, I will be  
    A dreamer to the last.

*Another Night Alone*

The fog rolls in, covering all;  
Concealing lies and oaths that fall.  
People rush to get indoors,  
Fearing dark and urban lores.  
A full moon peeks through black skies,  
Reflecting off a pair of lonely eyes.  
Dogs howl in the call of night;  
Vagrants search dumpsters for a bite.  
Papers blow around in the breeze;  
An owl cries and makes the world freeze.  
A cold sets in that chills the bone;  
It's just another night alone.

### Switchback

One second the world is in my hand  
A golden marble of seas and sand  
The next it's locked up in a vault  
And all the world's sorrows are my fault  
The switch is made with unconscious thought  
Everything before the change forgot  
Remembered with a cold slap to the face  
As truth and fiction are tossed into space  
Guessing to which could really be me  
And which is just smoke and mirrors to see  
Triggered by events out of my control  
Seeing or hearing apart of my soul  
Alice, Shannon, people whom I've cared  
The feelings I've felt and times we've shared  
The weather outside and the air on my skin  
All could cause a change to begin  
Never a medium, a safe place between  
Always extremes of joy or depression are seen  
Striving always for balance inside  
Yet unsure of my state with every stride.

**Yellow and a Black Tree**

Surrounded by black and smoke,  
I held you close to me.  
Your slender body in my arms,  
And I kissed you gently.

The air moving loudly;  
Chaos is the cost.  
Yet I didn't notice;  
In your eyes I was lost.

The evening has worn us all;  
We've barely the strength to stand.  
But you may lean on me, dear;  
I'll always be at hand.

It's impossible to be sad  
Thinking of the greatest night I've ever had.

*Ugh*

Hello to my world  
Haven't been here in a while  
So sorry I was gone so long

I've been away on a trip  
Visiting far off faces  
And seeing old stars

Far away have I been so long  
Probably should have called  
But I didn't know I'd be gone so long

Forever shall I have a home here  
This place has given me birth  
But excursions can be made

For life, for love, for happiness  
The things of my desires  
For which my world grows

Imaginary bliss and falsified hope  
As I stumble through the mirror  
Losing love for pain and scars

Soft bodies and souls do I watch  
Dreams of being held denied  
A pulsating orb in crimson

My world is nourishing me  
Mental refill station inside  
To feed and caress my soul

*Nirvana Attained*

Self-inflicted misery  
    strikes me to the ground  
Locked up and stored away  
    the pleasures I have found  
Insignificant desires  
    feeble dreams that fill my head  
False memories of love  
    and things I wish she'd said  
An empty life alone  
    for reasons of my fears  
Slamming into a wall  
    built to dam my tears  
Lessons sought out  
    yet never once learned  
Search rages on  
    no leaf goes unturned  
A slice of self-esteem  
    on which I may feast  
Superhuman strength  
    to fight a mirror beast  
Blood red eyes  
    glare as they scramble off  
Moaning boasts into night  
    to which I just scoff  
Beast be all gone  
    and peace is regained  
A love to find  
    and nirvana attained

## Echo

There's an echo rumbling through the entire block. Deep, and sometimes even rhythmic. It's slowly crawling its way into the brains of all the neighbors on the block, sneaking in through hidden passages in their ears, sliding past walls of work, and play, and whatever else may be occupying them at the time. Before long, they will begin cursing to themselves about the infernal noise, and when that won't help soothe them anymore, they'll open the screen doors, or crack their windows, and yell out, down the street, to stop that racket. The noise-maker will ignore the calls. I am the noise maker. The sound is my instrument, my bass, as I practice. I spend hours in my self-made world, alone with my music, playing and playing until my fingers are raw and bleeding, and my hands swell up, and are no longer able to move on their own. I'll put my bass down, and rest awhile, until I can manage to play again, and then I start anew. It's a daily procedure. When I was a boy, I dreamed of being a rock star. I wanted to sing. I wanted to be standing on stage, under hot, bright, shining lights, little miniature suns, and look out on a raspy, deafening, unintelligible din from a slovenly crowd. Picking up an instrument, and listening to the audience hush in anticipation, and then explode, like an atomic bomb, tearing at each other, at the chairs, at the very walls around them, as I begin to play my music. The dream fades, and I am once again in my little cave, with my bass in my hand, and papers scattered about the floor. I begin to play again. I visualize the rest of a band. Drums first, beginning, the bass-line backing it up, adding a splash. Guitar, kicking in with a burst of distortion, screaming tales of love, and sorrow, in a high pitched wail that only an alley cat can mimic, when serenading the full moon. As the music builds in intensity, so does the energy, and the audience, swelling, almost, like a sponge, old and dry, suddenly saturated in cold, fresh spring water. Dancing, hopping, moshing, in rhythm with the music, the beats I'm creating, feet stamping along with my fingers, gently slamming the thick nickel strings of my shiny black instrument. Just when the intensity of the music has built itself to a peak, hearts and notes pounding to the point of breakdown, with a few final slams, and a last lyric or two, the song ends, and the air is filled with a hush, tainted only by the after-ring of the song. The audience stares, exhausted and

energized at the same time from the music, and anticipating more. The daydream fades, and I'm back alone in my room, holding my bass, playing in front of an imaginary audience, where people listen, and the yelling neighbors don't exist to ruin the purity of my noise.

*The Magnamorous Epic Glitterings of Hope*

Peaceful bliss inseminating into dreams alive  
Forgotten travels show their wake and cobblers doth survive  
Forever tolls of mountain passes into cool dark night  
Things forgotten once again linger out of sight  
Howling winds and sand of time blow throughout my hair  
People wonder walking by, their thoughts voiced through a stare  
The salty razor seas come up as knowledge is reborn  
Golden nuggets fill the cups but wisdom does so scorn  
Old gray truths still kicking ass  
Lies lie naked on the grass  
And loneliness cries in the arms of his wife  
The beauty who loves him for all of his life  
As he sobs with his face to her breast  
The sickle of misery gives it a rest  
Fears and sorrows lifted off of their head  
Peace warms them as they lie in their bed  
Free of all the bloodsucking fight  
They make passionate love all through the night.  
Lonely and Love, a pair met so well  
A couple destined true through Heaven and Hell

*Pleasantly Content*

Tranquil in a raging storm:  
The eye of a hurricane.  
Stress pushed far beyond the norm,  
Yet the blue and white remain.

Perfection isn't proper now;  
Perhaps it just a myth,  
But perfection bores anyhow,  
And is annoying to be with.

Personal perfection better soothes,  
And nourishes the soul.  
In hard times it helps smooth,  
So very important a role.

And while even that is not achieved,  
Life can still be grand.  
For, doubtless, someday silver'll be received,  
And take you by the hand.

Until such a time is come,  
When the greatest gift is sent,  
Be thankful for every crumb,  
And live pleasantly content.

**Perseverance in the face of hope**

Forever longing to be held tight  
Striving for love with all of your might  
Wishing above all to find a soulmate  
Cursing the skies for an unlucky fate  
Dreaming that the stars will look back at you  
Jumping into love without thinking it through  
Never a worry about how it'll feel  
When you're left all alone with a heart cold as steel  
Forgetting past scars for a chance at tomorrow  
Remembering it all in a lake full of sorrow  
But despite being stricken down time after time  
And giving everything you have down to your last dime  
You're willing to get up and try it all over  
Looking always for your one destined lover

**Falling Into Grace**

Once afraid of touch  
Soft skin stinging as a scorpion  
Feared people hurt too much  
I was scared and hid from everyone  
Later on I learned  
And sent that fear away in many ways  
Not afraid to get burned  
In this; my journey into grace

Worry why it feels this way  
When I think I've found someone to hold  
I've never been one to say  
That the endless search never grows old  
But to sit and think about  
Seeing a brightness in another's face  
Blessings in an angels shout  
Guiding me as I fall into grace

Always thinking, worrying of  
Living life as the lone unbound  
Centering around one word: "love"  
And its golden-honey sound  
Letting imagination fly  
Out with the stars deep in space  
Little pin-lights marking  
A roadmap with directions into grace

Clinging to every sweet dream  
And every memory in my heart  
Of holding inside what can seem  
As life's goal, end, and start  
Learning from all  
Realizing that you cannot erase  
Letting pasts lead  
And make a trail leading into grace

**Six Hours**

Six hours lasting

Six hours without drain

Six hours going strong

Six hours without the pain

Six hours feeling alive

Six hours glowing bright

Six hours here and gone

Six hours out like a light

*The Fizz of Carbonated Hope*

Floating in a fantasy land  
Of insecurity and fear at hand  
Worrying about monsters within  
Telling me where to end and begin  
Never a break in the draining assault  
Or any question about if I'm at fault  
Because I'm a receptacle of all of life's woes  
Filled with garbage tossed aside by earth's foes  
Wandering in search of my perfect mate  
Wondering if she was forgotten when God decided to create  
Sitting alone in a shattered mental mirror  
Watching pieces of my world disappear  
Drowning in tears cried for ghost long passed  
Both fearing and wanting to join them at last  
Sins of the fathers and bullshit preached forth  
Lied to and spun until I don't know what's north  
Truth kept locked away in fascist vaults  
Bullet trains of fairytales come to fiery halts  
The good will prevail one day in the end  
Whether they will be loved or without a friend  
And to this I say that I hope it is so  
And a good future belongs to all those that I know  
For love them or hate them all humans deserve  
To be eternally happy with the dreams that they serve  
I also hope that all may find love  
The greatest of all gifts sent from heaven above  
And perhaps that I, too, may join the free  
And be one that the bright light of nirvana may see

## *Driving Perils*

I never would have believed that I would ever have a driver's license. Even when I was taking driver's ed, and after I had passed, I thought I would never pass the test. I was convinced that if I came close I would get in a car wreck or something, and not live to get the license. But there it is, and I've done more than my fair share of driving since I got it. It was a journey, though, that I'll never forget. At the beginning of the trimester at high school, it was always a race for everyone who wanted to drive to get on the class list before it filled up. Since I knew it was a race at the first break in classes for everyone who wanted to sign up, I sent my mother. Because of that my name was the second to the top of the list, second only to my friend Brian's, who had also sent his mom. For some reason, I thought that getting into the class would be the hardest part. I was wrong.

The class consisted of three parts. There was written homework, tests, and the drives. All the written stuff was just busywork. Anyone could do it if they paid attention, and read the drivers manual. The tests themselves were pretty tough, but I didn't have too much trouble. I was a good driver, in theory. I always understood what I was supposed to do, and when. But when it came to driving, it was a different story completely.

Most of the kids in my class had some experience driving. Their parents would let them mess around in driveways and back roads. There were only about three people who had never driven before, and I was one of them. Luckily, the first drive was restricted to the parking lot of the high school. Even so, I was so nervous my hands were sweating (which is rare for me). Before I go on, let me tell you about the man who taught the class, Mr. "Billy" Gardner. He was an intimidating guy, with a chin like that of Jay Leno, yet he was friendly at the same time. He would talk and joke while you were driving, but he was always very firm when you would screw up. And I did my share of that. On my second drive, we actually ventured out onto the roads, which sounded a lot easier than it actually was. I found it impossible to stay in my own lane, and almost drove two cars off the road, after which I tried to cut off a van that was going fifty, and probably would have killed everyone in the car if it wasn't for Mr. Gardner's brake. I was sure I would never catch on.

I eventually did learn though. By the fourth drive, I was able to drive without either accelerating nor decelerating, and by my final drive I could parallel park with no mistakes, and pass in the ninety range. When I was finished with that class, I was elated, until I noticed that Gardner had given me someone else's certificate. As soon as I went back and got my own, I was back to being elated. I thought that I was done with all the worrying and the practicing, and I was ready to get my license. Only problem was that my birthday wasn't for a few more months.

During those months, I had absolutely no driving experience. My own car was in pieces at the side of the house, and the rest of my family didn't trust me to drive theirs. Thus, the only driving I did at all until I was sixteen was done in an arcade. After I turned sixteen, I became impatient. It was well past time that I should be driving. But I wasn't. In fact, the next time I drove was about five months after my birthday, when I demanded to be taken out to practice. After fifteen minutes, my mother decided the lesson was over, and we went back home. A week later I spent another fifteen minutes driving before the lesson was called to an abrupt end. Mother decided it would be best to make the appointment before we practiced more, so we knew how long I had to learn. Our appointment was made for a little over a week from the day we went in, which is a lot shorter time than my mother had expected. We spent about three to four hours in the next week practicing in my sister's car, because it was decided that my Chevelle was not acceptable to take the test in.

As I sat and waited outside the DMV for my instructor, I saw one poor kid after another fail the test, and got more and more nervous. When my instructor finally arrived, I was convinced that these people did what they do just to crush the hopes of poor teenagers. The fact that my guy looked like an old sailor didn't give me any comfort. We went through the test routine, and I tried my hardest. Then it came to the tallying of points. I watched in horror as he subtracted point after point. By the time he was done I was left with a score of eighty-four. I had passed. I earned my license at long last. While I was riding in the car with my license in my hand, and the DMV far behind me, I noticed something on the scoring sheet: there was a low score that the paper that he didn't subtract from the rest. My score should have been lower than it was, but the instructor had spared me from failure. God bless the DMV sailor.

### *State of Mind*

As I sit and stare I try to find  
The slightest glimmer of peace of mind  
For my head is in a fickle stage  
It's given me a break in the sorrow and rage  
Instead it bewilders and confuses me  
Alters where I look and how I see  
Like a flash of lightening everything changed  
Social priorities have been re-arranged  
I forgot about Gillian because instinct said so  
And refocused on the angel who once told me no  
She's always been more special than I could ignore  
And I care again as much as before  
But I always said I'd never ask twice  
That I'd avoid being a pest for people hate mice  
I want very much to be by her side  
To be with such a wonder could peak one's pride  
How do I approach her without pissing her off?  
To show her I want to touch her so soft?  
I'll be social as possible and try to repent for the dance  
I'll do anything for her on a slight chance  
To be with Shannon, the best I might find  
That has spun me onto this odd state of mind

### *The Thoughts I Think*

Forgotten times of fearlessness building up on massive walls  
Realities of cowardice cover everything that falls  
Dreams and forward flashbacks of lives I want to lead  
Nourishing wishes to grow as though they were a small seed  
Never sure of the world and it's truth  
Not being able to find something to soothe  
A life lived in between time and thought  
Trying to avoid being what I am not  
A swirling mist of surreal pictures and sights  
Soaring aimlessly through enchanting lights  
Disconnected from the world that's real  
Never taught how to talk or to feel  
Rebirth from the shattered and misty haze  
Awaken in panic and a frightened daze  
To learn in a short while the skills of a lifetime  
Taking comfort only in the music and the rhyme  
Now a job to do and a new goal to reach  
Ghosts and friends all come to teach  
Offer advice on the situation at hand  
What to say, how to look, and just where to stand  
But no matter how good, suggestions are all that they are  
In the end other's words can only go so far  
My own decision, my own path to take  
Courage to contract; connections to make  
Gotta watch myself and make sure I don't space  
Don't want to hamper and chances at grace

*Wash Me Clean*

Attempted a walk but it did not set well.  
No direction seemed right  
Saw Gillian all around  
Yet she was nowhere in sight

A week can seem so long at times  
When one has something to do  
Something hanging on one's mind to ask  
And a special girl to woo

How can one be calm and relaxed  
If they're waiting with bated breath  
Perhaps that part will come in time  
Hopefully before my death

The three points of humanity  
Have I tried to find  
Always searching across the land  
And caverns of my mind

Once all the points have reached their peak  
Life's journey will be done  
And we will be released at last  
Our essence set free to soar past the sun

Future's freedom kept in mind  
We continue presents pain  
And live and love and grow inside  
And be washed clean with the rain.

## Grinding

There's a grinding noise inside my head  
    Telling me about my life  
It says I should lie down in bed  
    And give in to the blade of a knife  
Like stone on stone the noise screeches on  
    Eating away at my every nerve  
Until all my sanity is dead and gone  
    And I finally get what I deserve

The grinding takes away my hopes  
    And it replaces them with lies  
That my beliefs are kaleidoscopes  
    Deception in a happy guise  
The niceties that people say to me  
    Are all a joke played by the world  
And all the love that I can see  
    Is twisted, cold, and curdled

It grinds my soul down into dust  
    Which is blown around in the wind  
My heart bleeds rivers as red as rust  
    A gift of those with hate to send  
Wishes granted only for sick sadistic jokes  
    While an evil genie laughs  
My guardian angel too busy with the herbs he smokes  
    To guide me down my paths.

## *Lonewolf*

Solitaire the lone wolf howls  
Crying to the moon and midnight owls  
Silently through the forest prowls

Never had a pack or mate  
Seems the cub came too late  
The victim of a cold cruel fate

No one to tend him when he's ill  
No one with which to share his kill  
Or run with him across the hill

So frigid are the winter's nights  
And dangerous most kinds of fights  
But most lonely are the beautiful sights

The sunset over mountains grand  
The flowers blooming across the land  
All things for not one, but a band

Old and gray the wolf has grown  
And in his eyes no youth is shown  
All that's left is one final moan

### *Blueprints of Dreams and Realities*

Drowning as you walk across a tightrope high above the ground,  
Forgetfully remembering everything you've learned, seen, and found.  
Silently screaming out in pain at the thought of being bound.  
Reaching out to withdrawn eyes and the absent love around.

Betrayal coming dependably to the sight of a lonely heart.  
Any, all, and every dream awakened before they could start.  
Blinding visions taken from a nightmare and wishes passed as art.  
Missing someone, somewhere, unsure but unable to be apart.

Dying a long life doubled over by daydreams and rage.  
Half dozen answers to question, one feels right; seems sage.  
Two are far too distant, and one angel brought down by age.  
And by two of them I've already been discarded to a cage.

Serving insecurities and patrons brought round by hope.  
Bright eyes darkened by a body taught not to walk but mope.  
Time lost and wasted, eternity gone due to a machine bound by rope.  
Release never seen, found, lost, except in suicide or dope.

Energy held back by dark, evil masters that I cannot defy.  
Promises broken in a realization that all knowledge is a lie.  
Fighting against you in a lifelong struggle to get by.  
Deception changing life around and clouding till the day you die.

*Summer's Hope*

Sweating on a summer's night;  
Lying awake in peace.  
Dreaming a world built on a "might,"  
And painting a beautiful release.

Spinning through the clear, bright stars;  
Wearing a wistful cloak of black.  
Forgetting the difference between "nears" and "fars;"  
Both barreling forward and traveling back.

Searching off a list of gold,  
In a scavenger hunt for souls.  
Learning knowledge new and old;  
Collecting life and paying tolls.

Singing songs of energy and love,  
And dancing with the moon.  
Raining hope down from above;  
Washing out every desert dune.

[As of this writing, I still drive the Beretta mentioned in the article. Nearly a decade later, the car is now old enough that it could drive itself, if it managed to pass the test without my help. I have accidentally hit on girls younger than my car. Of course, for the past year it has been on its last legs, and when I want to get somewhere anymore, I set out with little more than a hope and a prayer. Still, that car is like family to me.]

### **The Auto; and American's Best Friend**

As a child, I could never point out the cars I wanted when I grew up. I didn't know for sure what I'd be like when I grew up. On the road, the car is all that is seen of you. No other identification, or personality trait is visible, just the car, and the driving. That made it somewhat difficult to choose a car, when the time came for me to drive. My first car was a 1970 Ford Torino. It was this greenish cream color, covered with the kind of dirt and crust that accumulated when something hasn't moved or been cleaned in years. I got it for free from the sheep pastures of my sister's boyfriend, Andy. It was pure crap. The inside was musty, moldy, and infested with funguses I'd never seen before. It was covered with leaves from the years of autumns. Worst of all, it didn't even run. We had to tow it to my house. The plan was that we'd rebuild the engine, fix it up, redo the upholstery, and paint it. The design of the body itself looked great. It was big, heavy, and powerful. Andy and I worked on the engine, and rebuilt it, though, to be perfectly honest, I didn't actually help that much. I'm not much of a "car guy." Andy and my sister broke up, though, before the car was finished. It had a new engine, and a good transmission, but for some reason, it didn't run.

As that my car didn't come close to going anywhere, I needed a car. I was starting college soon, and had no way to get around. So, I got a sky blue 1975 Chevy Chevelle. It was only slightly less a piece of shit than the Torino. It had been involved in a flood, so on the underside there was rust, up to a certain level, the "high water mark." The same level at which the fabric on the inside was rotten and moldy. We shampooed the seats, and re-carpeted the floor. I attempted to install a stereo system, which I failed at, so I used a battery operated tape deck. It stalled any time the car stopped, and needed fifteen minutes to warm up before it

could go anywhere at all. The car was terrible. It was beat and worn and useless. Unsafe and a pain in the ass to get anywhere in. I named it the Big Blue Bitch. Its only good attribute was that the front seat was a big bencher, and my girlfriend could sit right next to me as I drove. At night, that was the most peaceful thing in my world. But, one day, this car tried to kill me. As I was coming down the hill from Danny's house, with a load of luggage for the Outdoor School truck, the engine stalled right as I was going around a sharp, sharp corner. Now, this car was an unholy abomination, with an experiment in steering and brakes probably held together with rust from the flood, and river muck, so when the engine cut out, my brakes and steering were gone, too. So I careened for the corner, wrenching on the wheel, to get some movement. I was headed for a big ass tree. Luckily, I missed it, by a few inches, and missed another to the right of the car. I hit the underbrush, right before a huge tree, and then a steep cliff. I decided then and there that I needed a new car.

My aunt and uncle were selling a car for their friend, who was moving back home to Ireland. It was a 90 Chevy Beretta. Black. Nice looking. Only problem was that it was a stick, which I couldn't drive. But it was a good deal, and I sorely needed a car, so we got it anyway. I got a crash course in manual transmission, as I took off to see my girlfriend, who lived up a good number of hills. Especially for one who's never driven stick before. I made it, and I caught on. And, even got to be good at it. Or decent, anyway. Francis is her name, and she's a fine car. Fickle, on occasion, and the girlfriend's misstep caused a sixteen hundred dollar need for repair, in a new transmission, but I love that car, and trust her. I found my car. Slightly dinged up, usually dirty, but with a class all her own, and a lot of power and beauty underneath it all. She is me on the road. We dance, and move, as one.

**Disenchanted relapse into bleakness**

Fanatical delusions reaping forever words of gray  
Causing cataclysms and destruction to this very day  
Evermore and endless is the rain of heat and pain  
Drowning flames and burning cold urge through every vein  
Wisemen's tales and silver lining all passed and forgot  
The blind man ever seeks his trail and gifts that angels brought  
Blinding, never walking, ever into futures above the sun  
Discourse and turnabout and sunder back where you all begun  
Mapping out and talking not as to where you go amiss  
Pale lantern in the darkness of a never-ending abyss  
Stumble, trip, and plummet, with no one to catch your fall  
Straining, bleeding, searching, but not a soul answers your call  
Crawl as far on hands and knees as strength and spirit allow  
Either ignorant and blind or living in a future miles away from now  
Watching through a magic mirror dreams turn to piles of dust  
Passing time with dreams and fairy tales and imaginary lust  
Cruising through life all alone both too early and too late  
Watching, hoping, learning, trying to decipher your own fate  
Creating, following destroying your home-made philosophy  
Praying believing and fabricating just what the end will be

*Reams of Dreams*

Fickle, choosy, undecided  
Solid direction always hid  
Forests, rivers, roads strided  
Sitting, waiting, time bided

Loved, lost, loved again  
Endless cataclysms begin  
Ignored, iced, soothed pain  
Feeling, emotions, affection remain

First love, denied, forgotten; past  
Girlfriend, fell, sent away; last  
Idolatry, perfect, out of reach; blast  
Normal, unique, special; fast

Decision, direction, deception, confused  
Hope, ambition, unwanted, unused  
Sent away, good-bye, lost, refused  
Self-love, self-hate, addled, abused

## Sunshine

Uncertain winds tip the scales  
The river attempts to flow straight, but fails  
Lightning strikes four times the same  
No laws of nature stand to blame  
Fallen leaves, like dreams, float away  
The sun sets on another day  
Stars come out to mark the night  
The full moon changing and glowing bright  
A dark, cold lake reflects the skies  
Through the night a small owl flies  
Starving, alone, and trying to live  
Hopefully looking for a morsel to give  
For he has a family back at the nest  
Four little owls and a mate all rest  
Waiting patiently for him to return  
So they may all get rid of hunger's burn  
He returns at last with his beak full of meat  
Placing pride in all over his awesome feat  
The family sleeps full of love and of pain  
As the Sun rises over the horizon again  
The most beautiful sight any man could see  
So high and bright and forever free  
Possessing a face to make angels feel shame  
Her smile and a sunbeam are one and the same  
Her voice a warming air felt round the earth  
Just to be near her is like fire from the hearth  
The cycles of life all depend on her  
Somehow the Sun always has the answer  
As she warms all of creation and dries the rain  
And lets the world fall in love again.

## Scratch

Psychedelic fairytales in oranges and greens  
Pathological murmurings through patient screens  
Neurotic pastimes arouse dreams awake  
Indecision causes decision to forsake  
Decapitated wanderings through shadow's callow form  
Insanity and thoughtfulness pushed far beyond the norm  
Colors blasting outwards, stabbing in the dark  
Imagination overdrawn, scarring with a mark  
Under-ridden and out of breath, falling on your knees  
Clinging fast to everything that everybody sees  
Carving trails up and down soft flesh, a path for blood to flow  
Crimson fluid, warm and wet, drowning whatever you may know  
Breathing fog and fiery mist, blurring demon's eyes  
Capturing in harmony all that we despise  
Never fast and never strong, bound upon a stone  
Chained deep in a mountain, withered and alone  
Lost without a friend to guide or catch you when you fall  
Hoping for a beautiful face to answer to your call

*Never forget the love  
Never pass it by  
Never forget her warm touch  
Never, until you die*

*Scribbler*

Bluntly writing what I think  
No hiding in metaphor or lies  
Pushing my vocabulary to the brink  
Trying forever to capture what's in my eyes

Saving my soul of just my mind  
Writing to create calm, and peace  
Scribbling down every feeling I find  
And making what I can of this talent I lease

For love and pain and death all are  
And I can't change that in the least  
But after they have taken me afar  
I can be remembered for my word and not the beast

So, Alice, Shannon, my love for both  
Are captured for my memories desire  
All of my loves, wished desires, and loathe  
Captured in paper and words in fire

### *Simultaneous Infatuation*

Simultaneous infatuation, drowning my mind  
Seems that with them the more I search the more I find  
One I have been with, and kissed her soft lips  
The other has been around for years, and offers clever quips  
The first, sweet Alice, so beautiful and caring  
With whom it has been ended once, but at my heart is tearing.  
The other, Shannon, smart and bold, spirit so very strong  
So perfect and pretty, with a good heart; could never do wrong  
Between the two of them, I care no more or less  
And from happy thoughts of holding them my mind will not recess  
But I couldn't feel right with one, looking at the other  
Such a thing would disgrace me in the eyes of Jesus' mother  
Could it be I love them both, equal and refined?  
Or am I just a fool who dreams, but needs love to be defined?  
So sure I've felt it, warm and bright, in dream and merry thought  
A love so grand and powerful all evils are forgot  
But was that love in truest form, or wishes to be not alone?  
Fairytales made up over angels, a thing not to condone  
True or false, I may not know but this I know I can feel  
The emotion that I feel for them most certainly is real  
And even if it isn't love, it commands my every dream  
And Alice and Shannon are both amazing as anyone could seem

## *Cut Scenes*

In my mind, I see the scenes running by, one after another. I see her come back, for some reason. I used to see us working everything out, and getting back together. As time went on, that became less an endless easy task. Now? I see myself broken. Unable to trust her. Unable even to smile on what I had thought was the happiest time of my life. Because it was all lies. And as soon as I think I've found a golden nugget buried in the middle of everything, I turn it over to see its nothing more than a painted rock. Why does that have to be the way things go? Why couldn't I have been happy? Unlike some, I don't believe everyone needs pain. I think everyone deserves happiness. I try to provide as many people with that as I can, and to always be as honest as I can. Yet, time and time again, I myself am thrust into a world of pain, where all my happiest pictures all turn out to be smoke and mirrors. And each time, I run up to the images, hoping for them to be a window to the outside, not a reflection of the lies inside. But every time, I end up face to face with the shattered reflection of my own tear-streaked face, and my own pain. Staring myself in the eyes, two men with nothing to drive them, and nothing to lose, neither one being able to win, until they both collapse due to the extreme emptiness, which is all that fills them. And as they lie there, unconscious from the exertion, they dream. Sweet, happy dreams about love and the wonders of life, which quickly darken, and become horrible traumatic episodes, just as their own dream lives turned into nightmares.

## *Forbidden*

Lost in a forbidden place  
Dogged by feelings I cannot erase  
Looking for somewhere to go  
Which direction; I don't know  
Back door out or further in  
I have to know before I begin  
Certain of strong feeling for her  
Had one chance, should I try for another?  
Desire so deeply to hold her tight  
Being with her just seems so right  
Her smile can warm the coldest room  
And her gorgeous eyes easily consume  
The beauty and grace of a snow-white dove  
Could it be that I'm really in love?  
For two months I've tried to move on  
But as hard as I've tried not one thought is gone  
Care as much as I did before  
If anything, I care even more  
How can I feel this way about something past?  
How long will these painful feelings last?  
We were together for such a short time  
And when she broke up I responded in mime  
Should have said something, should have been a friend  
Certainly should have tried to stop the end  
It's been so long now, how could I go back?  
After all the virtues and attributes I lack?  
Unsure about what I desire to do  
Or if this "love" really is true  
But emotion is strong either way  
And I don't know how long I can keep it at bay

### **Idle Frustration**

Pose and model the worst of pop fashion  
Call out against society with all your passion  
Preach freedom of thought against another's opinion  
Parade through the clouds claiming to be Lucifer's minion  
Becoming the perfect Generation X cliché  
Shortening tomorrow by enjoying today  
Aspiring to be the greatest of rock stars  
Destined to be rocking out in all the local bars  
Authentic right down to the ulcer raging  
The end result of the anger your staging  
Milking the teen angst beyond its max  
Unaware of the originality it lacks  
Image engraved by the company you keep  
Gaining sympathy for the planned tears you weep  
News from your girlfriend changes the plan  
Impregnated by her previous man  
A brand new drug addict, ready for tomorrow  
Born into confusion, abuse, and sorrow  
Continuing writing songs about life being crappy  
Sitting in Ritzville, unemployed and happy

### *Gray Skies*

The rain falls down, softly;  
The skies are a misty gray.  
Spirits rise and fall softly  
And loneliness rules the day.

The frigid cold chills one's soul  
Leaving people shivering and alone  
Life deals us a lonely role  
With no one's love to call our own.

Drops of rain soak the self  
They purify the soul and mind  
Place bias and ignorance on a shelf  
New ideas and feelings to find.

The rain one day will cease  
And the sun will rise on high  
A break in clouds will grant release  
Where dreams and reality both comply.

## Youth

An endless circle of love and confusion  
The hearts of the masses form one large contusion  
Who cares for whom, and do they know?  
Feeling the world and never letting it show  
These two are in love, but these just pretend  
He would do anything for her, but she's just a friend  
Pain and jealousy hidden behind a smile  
Heart belonging to the first all the while  
A web spun of emotions and dreams  
Nothing is ever quite like it seems  
Caged and tied to into unwilling cliques  
Waiting to see who the other one picks  
Nobody is sure just where we're going  
Just making sure nothing too deep is showing  
Herding together down a packed hall  
Too close together to see the upcoming fall  
Judging true or false to all that you hear  
Death comes to all, but is so desired here.

### *Shooting Star*

Some may never see a shooting star in their time  
Others will pass them by for something sublime  
But a star like that is a blessing to find  
Streaking through the blackness leaving light trails behind  
And whenever you see one it could very well be  
Returning to us from an ages-long journey  
For all things beautiful return at least once  
The ones who ignore them truly are dunce  
Every soul in existence has their own star  
That's watching and protecting them from afar

My personal star is a base of love  
The one long-term wish I've always dreamed of  
One vision seems to always return  
All old coals and thoughts once again burn  
A shooting star contains fire; so bright  
And a glowing aura that gives off much light  
An electric blue, like lightning captured in eyes  
Host to a spirit with strength that never dies  
Visions of joining the star for a dance  
Wishing for a connection, and a second chance

The star has returned again and again  
Through powerful trials, the feelings remain  
Different than any other star in the sky  
To call her average would be an indecent lie  
Style and talents that dim all the rest  
Proven to be extraordinary by every test  
So beautiful and bright you could possibly go blind  
Yet so awesome a vision no one would mind  
If I could talk to the stars I'd have so much to say  
But such bright stars are always so far away

*Erehwon*

A narrow window to the world outside  
Where ignorance and immaturity hide  
A place free from the mortal bind  
Where the only restraint is your power of mind  
A perfect place full of fulfilled dreams  
Where truth is exactly what it seems  
The green things flourish in the cool, fresh air  
Worth no poisons or pollutions to impair  
Animals all live in harmony and peace  
Free of greed and of growing obese  
Where fear is a myth, and love all around  
Cheer and laughter make a musical sound  
Starvation and cold are but a nightmare  
It would be laughable to even compare  
A Utopia with beauty and perfection, so  
All seen through one narrow window.

## Amend

Forget the sins that lie in the past,  
Forgive the repercussions and memories that last.  
If "To err is human; to forgive divine,"  
Then the qualities of humanity are mine.  
Please let the divinity be your right  
And grace me with your essence of light  
I realize that I have behaved wrong  
And my indirection has seemed too long  
I offer you not a paltry excuse  
But the reasons for my acting recluse  
Life began and as a child I lived well  
Introduction to society felt like a hell  
I left the real world for one of my own  
Development was twisted, but that I have shown  
When confronted with one whom I'm fond  
I had no idea how to respond  
Scared of losing my hopes at the dance  
I ironically faltered, and ruined my chance  
I learned the rewards for a failure to speak  
And how this prize hurts the things that I seek  
Now I wish to talk, and have friends  
But I'm afraid I'm too weak to reach those ends  
How I felt that night I'll never forget  
Ruining your evening is my biggest regret  
I'm deeply sorry about how I was that night  
I wish there was some way I could make it alright  
You're the most incredible girl that's ever been  
A thought I've kept since the age of ten  
Excuse the fact that I'm apologizing in a letter  
As a person I can't form words better  
Remember just that it's you I adore  
Whether as a friend, or if it's as more  
I sincerely hope you accept what I say  
And maybe give me a second chance someday

## *First Floor: Men's Formal Wear*

I remember, exactly, the first time I got really, really dressed up for something. It was for a mock trial for a law class, in high school. I had never worn a suit before in my life. And I had never worn anything to school that was nicer than a long sleeved thermal and cords. But, for this trial, I needed to look nice. It was, after all, a requirement. I went to my best friend's brother, Sebastian, to delve into his closet. Aside from being my side, Sebastian was, in my mind, one of those guys who was often concerned about looking classy. It didn't take long for him to find me something perfect. He ran under the stairs, where he kept his clothes, and brought out a pair of dark hunter green slacks, a white shirt, a green vest with black design, and a tie. It must have taken him a half-hour to get me to successfully tie the tie right, but, when I did, I looked very stylish.

When I showed up at school that way, it certainly made an impact. Nobody had ever seen me look nice before. As I strutted down the halls, feeling the moving air fill the billowed sleeves of my dress shirt, I couldn't help but smiling. By the end of the day, I had been given more compliments than I ever had before in my life. Ranging from being told I looked like someone out of interview with a vampire (a combination of naturally pointed fangs and long hair) to looking very handsome. That day I learned a very important lesson: dressing up was a good thing. it was magic. I was no longer who I had been before, I was something else. I was debonair, I was classy. I was happy, smiling, popular. By changing my outfit, I changed my person. The next week, I bought some full suits of my own, as well as a variety of other clothes, all much different than what I was used to wearing. I started switching around. It was wonderful. I could be whatever I wanted, just by what I put on in the morning. A torn T-shirt, and a long wallet chain, and I was an angry punk. Black pants and skintight sliver shirt, and I was a mysterious yet eerily attractive Goth. A nice sweater and some jeans and I was wholesome and "cute". And every time I put on a suit, I was power. Knowledge and integrity and authority, all rolled in one. It was a startling transformation.

Since that time, I've used the trick of well-chosen clothing to work for me in job interviews, family gatherings, nights out to meet

people. It has never ceased to amaze and amuse me. So much possibility. So many different lives. All held together in one closet.

*Giggle Softly*

Merely a giggle, soft and sweet  
Yet so beautiful a sound  
The most wonderful sound, however fleet  
In which you could easily surround

A crystalline and perfect noise  
Capable of opening new gates  
Holding joy, position, and poise  
Such a pleasant world awaits

Sitting next to her; head on he shoulder  
So happy and swimming in swirls  
Minutes feel like eternity's, well never grow older  
And there are no other girls

Wishes place reality on pause  
The world lies beneath my feet  
All of this has just one cause  
Merely a giggle, soft and sweet

**Warm Up**

The gray skies come slowly  
Smothering out the sun and light  
Wind blows the rain like a flowing gown  
Shadows fall as dark as night

Rhythm and words play in my ears  
My soul in sync with the sounds  
Surroundings encourage lonely fears  
And spirits are driven into the ground

The rain outside falls wet and cold  
I am purple and soaked  
These shivers have grown old and tired  
My last will has been choked

Drops of water, small and still  
They will be gone before too long  
Shimmering, yet holding no will  
Just a note of a stormy song

### Questions

May my love please you?  
Might we be together, too?  
Perhaps I am a lone vagrant?  
Would a dead rose still be fragrant?  
If I were to die, would you mourn?  
Would you care at all were I never born?  
Would you be sad if you heard I was sick?  
Is there any way that I'd have been your first pick?  
If I said you were beautiful, would you smile?  
If I held you, would you want out all the while?  
Am I what you see when you close your eyes?  
Are my thoughts and views things you despise?  
Maybe my face isn't quite what you seek.  
My voice isn't perfect whenever I speak.  
Could I be enough, or do you need more?  
Would my touch be a feather, or festering sore?  
The road of my past too worn to be scratched?  
The fabric of my soul too often patched?  
My words a mass of thoughts and a waste?  
My music and pictures devoid of taste?  
Am I too neurotic to pass your test?  
An annoyance such as a household pest?  
Does my world seem to crack and peel?  
Do you distrust the things that I feel?  
Can you accept what I tell you to be true?  
Could I ever be good enough for you?



### *If Only I Could*

If I could make you happy, I'd consider myself a king  
Seeing a smile upon your face is a very special thing  
I can't help that I feel the way that I do  
Please understand that I care deeply about you  
The reason why is something you don't want to hear  
I never told you how I felt, out of fear  
Loosing you would have caused pain, and sadness too  
Later my own nightmare became far too true  
But nothing can change the way that I feel  
My love for you is definitely real  
Your eyes are there whenever mine are closed  
I've dreamt of you every single time I've dozed  
Your happiness would make my life complete  
Incapability is a hard thing to defeat  
Know that I'm gone, and deep in your past  
Understand that my feelings always will last  
If I can't be someone you love and hold  
Could I be a close friend to whom secrets are told?  
You're the only one who fits in my dreams  
Sexuality isn't always as physical as it seems  
Love must be present for love to be made  
Intimacy and emotion aren't always forbade  
Nor are they binding as a ball and chain  
Never would I cause you any pain  
I really wish I could be with you  
To hold you tight and kiss you, too  
I can't be what you need right now in your life  
That by saying "I love you" brands you as a wife  
But never would I expect such an oath  
I just want a connection between us both  
So, please, don't misinterpret the things that I do  
Or get to offended when I say "I love you."

### *The Sun Always Rises*

A feeling unbeknownst to me, unsure of the why  
Sending me spinning through the clouds up in the open sky  
Shangri-La is in my heart, and life pours through my veins  
The light at the end lies dead ahead, and I've got destiny by the reins  
My future is my lump of malleable gold  
It's design and purpose are all mine to mold  
Electricity courses through my heart, and begs to be free  
Stardust from angels rains down upon me  
My soul takes a rest from the responsibilities I bear  
While I may sit right here, I'm dispersed everywhere  
Forget the problems that Old Scratch hands to me  
I am young, and alive, and ever shall be  
My love is my fuel to keep going  
Affection my own gift to show just by showing  
My world is a place where my mind is born  
My dreams and visions are not to feel scorn  
Insanity proves as its own sweet reward  
Mundanity and ignorance will always be abhorred  
The paths beat down by others can help me with my own  
The cover of many dangerous pitfalls have already been blown  
My friends, love and dreams are all that I need  
My own thoughts and beliefs are all that I should heed  
Climb through the storm until the rain and wind stop  
And in the end you'll come out on top  
Words of hope in a dark time will help you endure  
The support of special people will always assure  
No one can take away your loves and your dreams  
Life's always worth living no matter how futile it seems  
The night may come, and bring back all your sorrow  
But the sun will always rise again in the morrow.

**Faithless**

Finding pain and losing faith  
Ghastly shadow of a wraith  
Haunting sounds of howling wind  
Mixed with cries of those that sinned  
Forgotten souls in cold exile  
Walking among us all the while  
In between the holy lines  
Lurk those for whom no light shines  
Cast away by all things good  
Struck down right where they stood  
No fire and brimstone consuming all  
No dark fallen angel standing tall  
Only cold and silence and solitude  
An eternity to think and brood  
To ask the lord, "Why this fate?"  
"Why must I exist in this sad state?"  
Echoes are the only reply  
If this is my future, please let me die

## ***Ugly Truth: The Manifesto of Another Leader of Tomorrow***

I imagine myself saving lives. I see myself colonizing other planets to save the innocents from the destruction and violence of the world we now live in. I see myself swinging around, like an old comic book hero, fighting the good, fight, outsmarting the bad guy, and throwing punches. But in the end, what am I? Have I done any good? Do I save lives? Or do I just dream? I've always been a dreamer. When I was a little kid, I dreamt about everything. Since I had no one to play with, I dreamed up my own friends, my own games, my own adventures. I would invent things in my mind that were unlike anything I had seen before, and any attempt to bring them to this world failed. Everyone said I was imaginative. I had a great future ahead of me. I could do almost any work that was given to me, and I still had time to think up new things. I was what they called a gifted child. A step above the rest. I attended classes that were supposed to challenge me to new levels, but it was all the same. All just assignments, with guidelines and rules and blueprints, and all I had to do was follow the directions I was given and I was suddenly a good kid. For following directions, and doing what I was told, people saw me as gifted. Is my gift, then, the magical ability to listen? To understand the directions given to me? or is my gift merely the lack of spirit it takes to do the work that was given to me. I always wanted to be special, to be a leader, and a creator. People told me I had the ability to do anything I wanted, because I was creative, and imaginative, and smart. And just look how I've used my gifts. The only things I've created are dreams, and more dreams. Pictures in my head of the things I only wish I could do in the real world. If I truly am a leader of the future, then I fear for all of us. I fear because I know what's inside me, and I know what other people don't. I fear that people may have mistaken smart for obedient. Anyone alive can retain information that they take in. It's just a matter of whether they will, or won't. In a school, every child is given the same assignment, with the same rules, and the same directions. Every child has the same resources at their disposal. The only thing they need to invest is the time and effort to follow the directions they were given. Why is it then, that so many children don't? Is it

because they aren't as smart, or do they just have better things to do? Could it be that I have been labeled smart simply because I lack the free will to do something other than the directions I was told? If I actually showed the initiative and bright future everyone said I did, then how is it that I have come to be unemployed, single, out of shape, lonely, and in debt? Shouldn't such a bright and hard worker be able to get a job easily? Should not someone who shows initiative be able to force their self to go to a gym at least three times a week? And wouldn't someone so creative, and smart, and as special as I be able to maintain a loving relationship, and have several good, trusted friends? It makes sense, which leaves me where? If a smart, dashing person can do all those things, what does that make me? If creativity is a gift, then those who wrote and drew and painted for a living would not be seen as lower forms of life, but as visionaries. And if my imagination and my own creativity were as magnificent as I've been told, would not someone care to see what I work on enough to ask? That, too, makes too much sense to deny. We judge ourselves by how others see us, and respond to us while we grow, so who we are is really just a collection of who people say we are. Sometimes people's judgment of us changes, but does that mean who we are changes? On the occasion that who think we are and who others say we are collide, which view is correct? When two opposites contradict, which will come out in the end? I am inventive and creative, yet my creations are unseen by anyone. I show intelligence and initiative, yet I am not worthy of the simplest of employment opportunities. I am a great person, and attractive, yet I am alone, and no one makes any effort to change that. I am important, yet I sit and dream and cry for days and not a living soul tries to help or comfort me. Words and actions often mean completely different things. The practice of pairing the two together has become extremely popular in the entire human race. A husband beats his wife, while screaming that he loves her and wishes to help her. A woman leaves a man, and crushes his will to live, yet claims that she loves him, and cares for him, and never wishes to see him hurt. As a child I was given medicine which was said to cure me, to help me live a longer and healthier life. That same medicine, a steroid based cure, stunted the growth of my body, and shaved years off the same life it was saving. These contradictions come from everywhere, from trusted friends, complete strangers, people who help, and family you love. Often they even come from

ourselves. The wife, being beaten, tells herself that her and her abusive husband truly are in love. The broken hearted man tells himself that the woman truly does care about him, and would never lie or hurt him. The woman doing the hurting tells herself she has no other choice, and is doing him no harm. Everyday, twice a day, I administered my own medicine to myself, believing that it was going to make me live a healthier life. How can we expect honesty from anyone, when the state of life has grown to such when we can't even trust ourselves not to lie to us. Yet we do. We place blame, and point fingers, yelling that others are destroying everything they touch, while we are all killing ourselves with our own lies. The things we tell ourselves to blind us from the pain that we all feel. We tell ourselves that we are happy, while we kneel, sobbing on the floor. We tell ourselves that we are wonderful people, while we sit alone and dream of being with anyone. We tell ourselves that we are smart, and creative, while we stand in the rain, unemployed and without the money or the talent to make anything of ourselves. We just dream up the things that we wish for, that make us feel better. Some people dream themselves being rich, some dream themselves as having a lot of beautiful women. It makes it easier for us to face our own realities. And myself, the smart, charming, imaginative young leader of tomorrow, who has plans to be happy, in love, and help others? I sit alone in a dark room, watching tendrils of smoke drift through the air, and imagine myself saving the world.

*Parasite Pies*

Nothing more than a parasite  
Empty mind and not too bright  
A window to be released  
For the nagging voices to be ceased  
Built up on a pedestal of thought  
Made up all the things that she bought  
A rash choice of someone to care  
Dropped into the picture from out of nowhere  
Gumming up the gears of the world  
Disturbing the corner in which peace curled  
She's nice and pretty, but not for me  
And being with her just isn't to be  
I know why she's on the stage she's on  
Pushed to the back of my mind, but never really gone

**Relief From Beauty**

The ending day has been hot and long  
Twenty thousand people waiting for this song  
Last strengths are mustered up to sing  
Over fields a single voice does ring  
The skies are a deep blue as the sun sets  
The richest color that the sky gets  
The blinding lights on stage pierce the space  
Bright colored reflections light up her face  
The glow accentuates her soft skin  
The reflections in her eyes are amplified from within  
Her lips move slowly as she sings along  
The musical notes that come out just belong  
A cool breeze blows her hair around  
It seems to dance in time with the musical sound  
Then her deep brown eyes turn to look at me  
The world disappears almost instantly  
To her incredible face there comes a smile  
Brief, yet encompassing all the while  
That picture is fleeting as time flies  
But I see it all again when I close my eyes

### *Why, God?*

Why do you make things the way they are?  
Are all your lessons and methods bizarre?  
How could you fill your own child with strife?  
What are you planning to do with my life?  
Where will I end up, and how will I get there?  
When I'm old, sick, and dying how many will care?  
Who will stand nearby and love me to the end?  
Which people will abandon the love that I send?  
Is everything a trial for placement at death?  
Do my accomplishments only live until my last breath?

Why do you make people fall in love?  
Are you trying to give us hope from above?  
How could you let our hearts be so hurt?  
Our souls broken and bleeding, and lying in the dirt?  
Does heartache make people stronger?  
Or just make our lives painfully longer?  
What is the point of taking her away?  
But letting the things I feel for her stay?  
Am I supposed to wait for her forever?  
Should I just give up hope of us being together?

Why do people we love have to die?  
While killers still kill and liars still lie?  
Must good people always be rare?  
Do we have to learn just not to care?  
Should we stop letting people get near?  
Make every strong feeling just disappear  
Close off every path to our heart?  
Live our lives lonely, separate, and apart?  
If death is so natural, why doesn't it feel right?  
Aren't good things supposed to keep us warm at night?

Why doesn't anything make sense?  
Are we all really that dense?  
I love her, why won't that stop?  
I've tried many times, why won't it drop?  
Why have I lost people I hold dear?  
Who chooses my course, and why can't I steer?

Will I learn how better to deal?  
Are my only good memories the ones that I steal?  
Who will be there by my side when I cry?  
Who will stand by my grave when I die?

## *Her Love*

I've never felt this way before  
So much uncontrolled affection  
I shouldn't love her anymore  
It's like some kind of Eros infection

I feel like floating free through space  
At every one of her precious words  
I wince every time I see her face  
She's so beautiful that to look at her hurts

When I see her looking tired or sad  
All I want is to be her comfort  
Being unable to help her pains me so bad  
It's more intense than any words could report

I never thought I'd end up like this  
Stuck wanting only to be with her  
No touch would be sweeter than her soft kiss  
Her love is the only answer

I've never wanted pleasures of the skin  
To connect physically with someone you didn't love wouldn't be right  
Yet I'd make love to her if we were together again  
And hold her close to me through the night

*Spectral Lies*

Beautiful eyes, soft warm skin  
Don't want an end, but to begin  
Love her more than words can say  
Dream of returning to her some day  
Could get lost in her eyes forever  
A feeling so strong it just wont sever  
Try to move on, forget all thoughts  
Tread carefully over the sore spots  
Find oblivion in another's eyes  
Attempt to make truths out of the lies  
Some things are simply too good to be real;  
How happy I was, the things that I feel  
Her vision lights up, like no other  
I'll never forget how much I love her  
How good it felt to hold her near  
Her honey-sweet voice being all I could hear  
The giggle she'd make whenever we kissed  
Everything about her will be missed  
No mater how the situation seems  
I'll always remember her in my dreams

## *Inquiry*

If I told you I loved you, would you run and hide?  
Would you embrace the feelings that lie inside?  
Do you listen to your heart or your thought?  
To be safe would you toss aside all that you've got?  
Does what you fear overpower all that you know?  
If your heart gave you ideas, would you make them so?  
Are your actions really what's in your soul?  
Have you cast yourself into an unwanted role?  
Did you feel the pictures in my memory?  
Maybe I just dream all the things that I see?  
Was being with me really that unpleasant for you?  
Is there anything at all that I could say or do?

How could you possibly not know that you fell?  
How could you expect to be with such an angel?  
Why didn't you say all the things that you felt?  
Did you play best the hand that you were dealt?  
Was there anything that you could have done better?  
Did you follow your heart right down to the letter?  
Were you as caring as you could possibly be?  
Did you try to share with her all that you could see?  
What on earth is the matter with you?  
Was every word you told her true?  
How could you lose someone you cared for so much?  
Why can't you forget her heart-warming touch?

Were you just playing with us as if we were toys?  
Do you get amusement from our tragedies and joys?  
Was it all punishment for some great sin?  
Was it all just a game that only you could win?  
How can you cause this much pain without giving reasons?  
Are you getting too bored with just changing the seasons?  
Do simple mortal feelings even touch you at all?  
Are you really there to guide or just to watch us fall?  
Was it all a lesson to teach the meaning of love?  
Were you merely tossing misfortune down from above?  
Are you planning on ever taking my pain away?  
Will you bring us back together someday?

## *The Theory Behind the Pink Mohawk*

Punk music has been in the stereos, clubs, and minds of the world for decades. Manic beats, screeching instruments, and wailing lyrics about the problems of society. Every punk band in existence, it seems, is out to save the world. Yet after two decades, the only things that have changed are the punk bands preaching their woes. Punk bands don't last very long, you see. It's part of the anarchist theories. The very basis of punk: haste. Haste in the release of records, the playing of music, the decision of words. It's what causes bands to go from fame to forgotten in a matter of months, and the reason most punk bands sound so achingly similar. But to the followers of this music, it's a religion. It's a way of life. Anarchy. Chaos. Free choice. Every song or lyric is a gospel, every complaint is a plague, and every idea is the answer. Of all the subcultures this world has to offer, is there any full of more shit? The faithful punks of the world refuse to recognize any authority. They call their parents by first names as a way to blatantly disrespect them. They applaud any who break the rules as being freedom fighters. Any who face a larger opponent are the victims of a fascist world. The answer lies in anarchy, because anyone in the position of authority is wrong. Authority leads to greed, and war. But, if these punks know all the answers, then why haven't they made the world a better place? Why are there none of them working to create a new, better society? Is it because those in the position of power oppress them, in fear of becoming obsolete? Or is it because the answers are as hastily put out as the music they listen to? They see their parents as the enemy, because they have rules, and try to keep them from being who they are. All the parents have done for them is give them life, and they never asked for that. And everyone is only lucky that their parents don't share the same attitude. If you found yourself broken down on the side of the road, and someone came up to help you out, would you turn them away, or scorn them, because you didn't ask for their help, or would you thank them for going out of their way, perhaps being late to their own appointments, just to give you a hand? After all, they could have kept driving, laughing at the poor fucker who had to walk to get help. But they made a decision to change their plans, and do the right thing. Parents are much the same way, only they decide to change the rest of their lives. To suddenly have

another life in the world, which comes before everything, every other appointment. Something to protect at all costs. To share all the wisdom you can offer with, so that they may grow to be strong, healthy, good people. To be a Mommy or a Daddy. Imagine being the parent, and giving up 14 years of your life to be called “Judy” or “Bob” as a constant reminder that you mean nothing to the child you gave up your free life to raise. A constant mockery of your beliefs, and the things you tried to instill in your kids. But that is the punk way. Stopping oppression by rioting and property damage. After all, a message spray painted on the side of a wall or bridge will surely be remembered by all who see it (as proof that this generation has no respect or intelligence), and stopping a gay-bashing party with violence certainly teaches them a lesson they won’t forget (next time; bring weapons). Punk music, and its followers, aren’t bad, per se, and often times, they do have good ideals. But, the assumption that the rest of the world is dumb, or doesn’t quite know what you do, often gets in the way of that. There are certain things that some people have to live with. Society will always need someone in authority; they just need to choose people who won’t abuse their power. Being young doesn’t mean you aren’t equals with anyone; but you do have to watch yourself more. Minorities may face problems in life; but the entire world isn’t out to get them, and it isn’t as bad as you make it out to be. No matter what, there will be someone who doesn’t like you; but the world is not out to get you. There is nothing wrong with fast music. It’s a cornerstone of society, and the world would be a worse place without it. But that doesn’t mean that your decisions, beliefs, of ideals need to be as hastily thought out as the music you listen to.

### **Idiot Box**

Fill my head with your lies  
Tell me who to despise  
Whose at fault and what they did  
Which of today's evils I should rid  
Why the world is in this state  
How we can make the troubles abate

Mind-numbing puppets for our youth  
Insolent protection from the truth  
Brain washing tomorrow's leaders  
Turning everyone into bottom feeders  
Trying to control all our thought  
Gaining power with every lie that's bought

Amuse me with your low-brow jokes  
Show me worlds made up in hoax  
Use carbon-copied stories and lines  
Set changes from palm trees to pines  
As original as a thief can be  
Stealing away versions of false reality

The television shapes all of our lives  
Forms our guidelines for futures or ideal wives  
Molds the bias of others into our mind  
Giving sound to the deaf and sight to the blind  
All everyone can think of to do  
We've forgotten how to create something new

*Untitled again*

Some things just never make sense  
Can't tell if I'm weak or really that dense  
But I'm always developing some sort of crush  
Either for dreams of love or emotional rush  
This one seems to be for you  
For the things that you write, and the things that you do  
For you have been a really good friend  
And I hope that you will be until the end  
Its foolish, I know, to tell you at all  
To give in to the poems call  
But you have some of the best qualities  
You see things that no one else sees  
Your way with words and your love for writing  
Your poems and letters are all worth sighting  
I like how you express the way you feel  
How everything you say always seems real  
Your thoughts and views on the world you're in  
So many things I don't know where to begin  
Honest, and sweet, emotional and true  
Beautiful, polite, admittant, you  
Most of the things I'm looking for  
Those I know, those I don't, and more  
If I could fly or the distance was small  
There'd be nothing keeping me from you at all

*To He Whomsoever Guides My Path*

How could I have ever doubted?  
Raised my fists to the skies and shouted?  
Declared to you that your ways were sick?  
Thought that your way was all a trick  
I learned off pain, loss, and despair  
Heartbreak and loneliness have all been there  
As I reached the end of my rope  
You smiled apon me and gave me hope  
A girl came to me to talk  
With a lot of personality in stock  
The more I heard the more I cared  
Both for differences and the things we shared  
Now I'm with that wonderful angel of yours  
Her light has helped to heal my sores  
More and more I begin to see  
That she's one of the best things that happened to me  
New lessons full of happiness are learned  
I love her and that loves returned  
Please let this last as long as it can  
Memories and years may it span  
Thank you for giving this thing a start  
I promise it'll always be in my heart

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I thought I'd always be alone  
With no one to hold or love  
But then a brilliant light shone  
Directed by the heavens above

Someone new came into my heart  
Faster than I could see  
I didn't expect a romance to start  
Or guess how happy I would be

I smile whenever I think of her  
The times we get to share  
The many feelings I remember  
Her voice, eyes, skin, hair

I savor every second together  
May these feelings last forever

*Shed No Tears*

Please don't shed a tear for me  
Its something I never want to see  
I want to make you smile and laugh  
You're the only thing I really have  
I wish I could do more for you  
And do everything you want me to  
To be the perfect boyfriend  
Loving you until the end  
Listening to secrets that you keep  
Softly singing you to sleep  
Hold you tightly in my arms  
Keep you safe from all harm  
I never want to make you sad  
To make you think about the luck you've had  
Or anger you in any way  
Through things I do, or don't, or say  
I love you more than anything  
For you I'd pawn heavenly wings  
I promise you're on the top of my mind  
More incredible than anything else I could find  
So please don't accept any strife  
You deserve the most perfect life  
And please don't shed any tears for me  
I'll never cause you misery

*I'll Stay Cause I Wanna*

Don't stay out of fear, and chains that bind  
Rather than the will of a free mind  
I never want to be apart from that girl  
But because I love her more than the world  
I panic when I'm stuck in a cage  
Don't lock me up out of past rage  
Love me for me and I'll return the feeling  
Receiving gifts is much better than stealing  
I told you my heart because it was true  
I'd never want to lie to you  
Don't ever think I'll back out  
Or become enraged and start to shout  
I hope you'll do the same for me  
And let me reasons to be with you be free  
You're not a bet or some charity  
You're an awesome girl; the best to me  
Never fear or think about if I retire  
Just know that I'm here out of my own desire

*Am I Suited?*

Falling water in my ears  
A soft mist on my face  
My heart speaks its darkest fears  
And surely does it race

Fears of losing my deepest love  
And being all alone  
Giving blackness a hopeful shove  
Where once a bright light shone

I believe her words are true  
That she truly holds me dear  
But are the things that I do  
The reason that she's here?

Hurt and afraid of solitude  
She needs someone to hold  
A self despising attitude  
From all that she's been told

Am I just there to fill the void?  
To fight for her crown?  
Or are my feelings being toyed,  
By what lies deep down?

I tell her I love her in honesty  
From the feelings of my soul  
Is her reply that of sincerity?  
Or just a familiar toll?

I need her in my life now  
I'm nothing without her fires  
I want to be with her forever, don't care how  
If that's really what her heart desires.

## *A Friend of Ages*

The value of a good friend is impossible to judge in numbers, comparisons, or flowcharts. I believe it can only be said that a true friend is probably the most valuable thing a person can be bestowed with. I've been lucky enough to have had, in these past eight years, one of the best on god green earth. His name is Brian Taylor.

We met in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, in math class, when I, a chubby nerd, had no other seat to sit in except for the one beside a scrawny tan kid, with a head that was a little too big for the rest of his body. He has a wicked gleam in his eye. After I had been seated for a minute, he leaned over and said "Hey, you wanna see something cool?" I said sure, and, moments later, he took from his desk a deck of drawn pornographic playing cards. To a 5<sup>th</sup> grader, age of ten or eleven, I'd guess, such a treasure was worth more than a pirate's gold. We giggled with childish glee as we flipped through the cards, pointing out what we especially liked about each picture. Before long, the class had started, and the cards were put away, until, finally, it ended, and lunch began. Immediately, Brian and I were at the fence on the outskirts of the playground, once again staring in fascination at the cards. To him, it was another treasure he'd managed to snag into his own personal collection, and, to me, it was a step up from the bible pictures, fine art, and health books I had previously used to find such simple pleasures. It was instant bonding.

Though we had met, and established a connection that year, we didn't become friends until the next. 6<sup>th</sup> grade, in our system, meant switching to a new school. Suddenly everyone was older than us, bigger than us, and new kids, from other schools, were in all our classes. In the first day, arriving in Mrs. Cord's English/Literature block class, I was lost. I didn't recognize a single person. I picked a desk in the corner, where I could keep an eye on everyone, and, to my dismay, almost every face that came through the door was that of someone I had never seen before, or had recognized from school before, but didn't know. Then, Brian came through the door. I saw a similar look of confusion and dismay on his own face, which changed slightly when he saw me. He immediately made his way over, and sat near me. Happy to have found a familiar face, we both began talking nervously about

the new school year, classes, summer adventures. One more friend, Tom Wilson, joined us at one point, and before long, we had formed a closer bond, forced by thirty unknown kids cornering us together.

From that year, our friendship started growing. We made plans after school, though at the time it was rather hard for us to make plans, due to the fact that he lived in the hills, and our parents were all generally too busy to drive us around. By the end of the first year, we had become best friends. That summer brought on many adventures, which at the time were great experiences, though, were actually as simple as biking down to the local Foodway to play the street fighter arcade game with as many quarters as we could scrounge together.

Years passed. While other friends came and went, appeared, and then grew apart, Brian and I just grew closer together. We were complete opposites, yet so similar in enough ways that it made everything else completely irrelevant. In the hard times, we always had one another. In the fun times, there was nobody we'd rather be with, along side in pranks. He even was accepted into part of the family, after a few years, which made trips much more interesting.

One year, my mother, sister, myself, and Brian all went to the beach. I think it may have been the first long trip that Brian came along on. It's certainly the one I remember the best. It was one of the funnest times of my childhood. The first day was all driving, and we ended up staying in another hotel, and the entire day was family activity. I don't even remember much activity, in general. But, even though all I did was complain, for the first time I had someone complaining with me, and making jokes with me to pass the time and entertain ourselves. The next days ended up being almost complete freedom, just hanging out in a beach town. Browsing through the little shops, picking out gifts for people back home, and then plotting to get the gifts while still saving our hard-earned allowance money. After the first day, whenever we entered a shop, we had half the staff following us around every aisle and every turn we made. We left the shops laughing at the ridiculousness of it, and rented banana bikes, taking on a mission to chase down and capture as many seagulls as we could. Which may have worked, had we been able to keep our bikes from crashing, and from being distracted by some bikini-clad beauty or another. Both of us wrecked our bikes fairly badly, at one point or

another, and were force to sneak over to where someone had left their own bike unattended, and swap them, so we weren't fined at the rental tent. In the end, Brian managed to crash his second one, and we had to return them and sneak off before anyone noticed the fact that the poor thing barely rolled.

Through then high school years, things changed little. Mother and sister went once on a trip to Disneyland for four days during spring break, in which we made it out goal to take over the house, and move as little as possible. We sat for hours, maybe days, in beanbag chairs, only getting up for more food, or bathroom breaks. Anytime we wanted food, we sent his girlfriend at the time, who was a year older, thus was mobile, to get it. Invited over another friend, Brody, to join us in our vacationing at some point. it was probably the most lazy and lethargic the two of us have ever been, yet at the same time, its one of our strongest memories. Certainly one of the fondest.

One of the most amazing things about my friendship with Brian is that, in all the years we've been friends, we've never had a real fight. Never yelled, never threw punches. There've been times where it seemed we were growing distant, but they've always been resolved, and we moved on. There has never really been a time when I didn't think he was there for me, didn't care, and id like to think he feels the same way. It's grown to the point where he's just become a fixture in my life. Even when he's not with me, I understand him so well, anticipate him so completely, that a mental version of him is still with me, making jokes, or comments. Knowing when is the perfect time for a one-liner, and checking out any girl that might catch his eye. Even in the heard times, I cant imagine a time when Brian is not a part of my life, and I don't think it could possibly be considered a complete existence, a full story, if I'd doesn't end with us crazy old men, rocking in chairs, telling our grandchildren stories of what insane lives we had, and all the adventures. He is, without a doubt, the best friend someone could ever hope for, and I love him dearly for it, and will always cherish him.

*Please Don't Say It*

Please don't tell me it's over  
Don't leave me here alone  
Show me some mercy  
Throw me a bone

I need to be with you  
I need you in my life  
I want to be with you forever  
For you to one day be my wife

You are my angel  
Sent from skies above  
You are my happy thought  
The only one I love

Please tell me you love me  
Don't send me away  
I hope you can still find me attractive  
In every single way

I'm sorry that I'm not perfect  
I doubt I can be what you deserve  
I wish I could be better  
My only job is to serve

You're a goddess, so beautiful  
Perfect past what any man could dream  
To think you're all mine is gold in itself  
Brighter than the sun, sweeter than peaches and cream

*Untitled*

Stand with me  
Hold my hand  
Go with me  
To faraway lands  
Please be the one  
Stay with me  
And I'll love you  
For eternity  
Don't leave me  
Don't go away  
I love you more  
Everyday  
Need your love  
To survive  
You're the reason  
That I'm alive  
My happy thought  
My light at the end  
My romantic lover  
My supportive friend  
Make me feel better  
Care for my ills  
My magic mistress  
I'll follow your wills

## Questions & Comments

Sucker to the world  
Tossed around by every girl  
A fool to not say no  
Taken advantage of wherever I go  
Used up like a bottle of booze  
Just try and beat me-I was *born* to loose  
Gray clouds move in and swallow me whole  
Leave my world black, and darken my soul  
Take away the sun and kill the stars  
Lock all happy things behind rusted bars  
Bend me over the prisoner's way  
And make me live life every day

Why am I the way that I am?  
Why do I fall for everyone's scam?  
Why does the hurt not go away?  
Why do I never have anything to say?  
Why am I so quick to help others?  
Why do I wish I had more potential lovers?  
Why can't I prove to Carol she's the one?  
Why is it so hard to have fun?

Who will tell me if I'm wrong?  
Who will help me sing my song?  
Who will treat me like I'm real?  
Who will help me learn to feel?  
Who should I trust and tell my fears?  
Who should I let see my own tears?  
Who's the one who will love me forever?  
Who's the one who will keep me tethered?

What will it take to finally be free?  
What will it take to make me see?  
What is the point of getting ahead?  
What is the reason we bury our dead?  
What are the forces that make the world spin?  
What are the actions that make things begin?  
What kinds of people can cause so much pain?  
What are the secrets that fall with the rain?

Where are the people who I call friends?  
Where are the means to tie all loose ends?  
Where might I find my pot of gold?  
Where are the truths to the stories I'm told?  
Where does evil and good combine?  
Where are the gates, and where is the sign?  
Where are the curses that fall to my feet?  
Where is the place where awake and dreams meet?

When will I know what I'm supposed to be?  
When will my pathway be known to me?  
When are our heroes going to come home?  
When will the gods return to Rome?  
When will our hearts let go the abuse?  
When will the weapons run out of use?  
When will the big ones finally drop?  
When will the voices inside my head stop?

**Do You?**

Do I Sicken you?  
So full of faults  
Failing  
Lost  
Hopeless  
Do you feel you have to find another?  
Someone who you really love?  
Connect with?  
Share life with?  
Do you want to escape?  
Get away from your folly?  
No more overbearing boyfriend  
No more pretending  
No more long nights or incompetence  
Do you think you've found better?  
Ready to move beyond the past  
Into a new love  
Companionship  
Passion  
With him  
Do you want me gone?  
Out of your way  
No longer underfoot  
Do you hate me?  
Do you think I'm a waste?  
Ugly  
Stupid  
Spacey  
Do you want to be done?  
Do you?

*Ouch*

Busy with another guy  
The beauty of another's eyes  
Out on a movie date  
Your boyfriend's love just doesn't rate  
The new guy is so much more like you  
And surely better looking, too  
Much more fun to just sit and talk  
So proud to hold him close on walks  
To give you all you've ever dreamt  
Joy much more suited for you to tempt  
Your dumb-ass boyfriend doesn't have a clue  
He's too busy dreaming of only you  
Stay with the loser out of pity  
God, I hope she doesn't forget me

## *Story of a High School Sweetheart*

Somewhere out in the world, there is a girl who goes by the name of Carol Shelton, as you could tell by looking at her ASB card, which lays in the bottom of a box of memories, in a drawer. For a little over seven months, this girl was my entire life. She was my reason for doing everything, my inspiration, and my happiest of happy thoughts. It was the best 7 months ever. She was indeed a unique individual, like no one else I've ever met. She was a cross between the grunge queens seen on the cover of many magazines in the early nineties, and a model from a Nordstrom catalogue. A city girl and country bumpkin mixes perfectly to create a very, very special person.

The first time I met her was at a Mudhoney concert, which tells a lot about her personality right there. She was looking a little tired from waking up early to get Pearl Jam tickets, too. From the second I saw her, I knew she was gorgeous, and incredible. Then, when she approached me on the computer one night, under a name I immediately recognized as belonging to a true grunge scholar, my thoughts were confirmed. I knew that it took someone who was really into grunge to come up with a name like that, taken from the underground band Malfunkshun, and their magic number "333." As I got to know her, I got to know the other sides of her, as well. Aside from her excellent taste in music, there were her country side, her preppy side, her athletic side, her poor abused side, and her fun-loving side, among others. Her closet had a combination of things from flannels, to overalls, to the latest in fashion. While she was often teased about the nicer clothes, it was undeniable that they looked great on her, and they fit her personality well. Carol was a mall girl, inside and out. If she had the money, she probably would have spend every day of her life shopping. If she hadn't had so many other sides, one would assume she was a preppy through and through. I would have thought that myself, had I not been brought up to the barn so soon after knowing her.

The barn was where her horse was kept. Now, far be it from me to claim to know social classes, but often the truest of yuppies aren't much for raising horses, or at least that's what I thought. Yet, there she was, dressed in old, beaten clothing, hugging a dusty brown horse in the middle of a dirty old barn. The

horse's name was Costly, and Carol saved up for years, and bought Costly all by herself. Before she decided it was cruel (the same basis for not eating meat), she used to ride that horse all the time, and take her to shows, and the whole bit. Now the horse spends most of her time grazing, and getting groomed, but I'm sure that someday Carol will decide to get back to riding, when she's sick of running herself.

That day may never come, however. Another one of the most important things to Carol was running. Since she started high school, she's been in Cross Country and track every year, and done well in both. Being in shape is very important to her, which is why she always said running was so good for her; she loved that she was always in great shape during the season. Running wasn't always one hundred percent her choice, though. Her father was always very adamant about her athletic accomplishments, and always had a tip or two about how she could run a better race (though his exercise was limited to a brief walk now and then). Her father was often hard on her, and thought her some things that no one should have to learn. He's a decent man and all, but she told me things like he would mock her every time she would look in a mirror, and made all her accomplishments seem like no big deal.

Those lessons later on were part of what got her into some bad situations, and some very harmful relationships. When I met her, she was depressed, and carried more than her fair share of physical and emotional scars. But the physical scars faded, and she did a lot of working through emotional scars, and she has become a very extraordinary person. True, our relationship didn't work, but I never regretted anything, and I couldn't really think of anything she needs to change about herself. She is a good looking preppy, a princess of the fading grunge world, a country-blooded animal lover, a vegetarian, and the first person I ever loved. She will always have a special place in my memories, even if she is no longer a part of my life.

## Prison

Forever longing to be loved;  
Never feeling quite full inside.  
Always pushed around and shoved,  
Left behind and tossed aside.

Solitude and silence are home sweet home;  
Sweetness rotting flesh and bone.  
Toward the setting sun I roam,  
A journey of pain and being alone.

Sorrow gives some solace here,  
Agony is a well-known friend.  
Forbidden to all that I hold dear,  
Wishing for the rules to change or bend.

Surrounding walls protect and serve,  
Making safety and a prison both.  
Taught "What you get's what you deserve,"  
Harsh lessons create more personal growth.

Try to break the stone wall down,  
Love will set me free.  
Escape through gorgeous spheres of brown,  
Fearing it will never be.

There's always more than one way out,  
Some path harder and less divine.  
Nothing is gained by a wail or shout,  
Just think and pray for a holy sign.

An angel received from Heaven's gates,  
Float down to heal and rescue me.  
Valhalla's warmth and love awaits,  
Please, my love, let me see.

Outside barred windows at night stars shine through,  
Whispering promises of my release.  
Showing my options of what to do,  
Uncovering my eyes from a moonlit fleece.

Ignore my prison; wait for it's end,  
Find a way to forget the pain.  
Alter the sentence; the prison befriend,  
Pursue the intense feelings that remain.

Love is too strong to keep inside,  
With no possible way to vent.  
Feelings must never be forced to hide,  
But accepted as gifts; heaven-sent.

*Yesterday*

Green fields in mass amounts,  
Furry animals pounce.  
Nature open, always free;  
Just the way it's supposed to be.  
Man and land,  
Hand in hand.  
Aliens come in herds;  
Speaking very strange word,  
Killing men in giant slews.  
Scaring us with the weapons they use.  
Falsified peace to cover lies,  
Invisible magic and everyone dies.  
Corralled into sections of near dead soil,  
Our animals die, our foods spoil.  
Land removed of all that's green;  
No equality for men to be seen.  
Years of rape from the newcomers,  
Building up over many summers.  
More grey now to the clouds,  
Our people are no longer proud.  
Look up to see the burning sun,  
Is this a sign of things to come?

Today

A stab in the dark,  
A shot in the park,  
Dark alley brutality;  
The victim found stark.

Anger in roadways,  
Shouting at delays,  
Increasing impatience;  
As all violence stays.

Small children with guns,  
Teachers must run,  
Premature mock-adulthood;  
Childhood's no longer fun.

Lack of connection,  
Short-term attention;  
Humanity lost,  
In this high tech invention.

Learning through substance,  
Not keeping a distance;  
Chemicals prevail,  
Over all kind of resistance.

Mother nature has cancer,  
Few left to romance her;  
Calling for help,  
No one will answer.

Ideas of how to solve,  
Stop values that dissolve,  
Solidify life,  
And find final resolve.

## Tomorrow

Appropriation minimized;  
A meaningful look into her eyes.  
Longing desire like a waterfall,  
For things that are not there at all.  
Wistful wishes on the winds,  
Blows knowledge to all those what sinned.  
Stronger for to lead the morrow,  
While the good folk drown in mire and sorrow.  
Sheltered with soft skin to feel,  
Scorning those with skin like steel.  
Adapting to the futures needs,  
Help lent to "He-Who-Heeds."  
Separate-yet-together stands,  
Tall and strong against demands.  
Together-yet-apart will die,  
The whole of every holy lie.  
Traveling far and long they roam,  
Stopping to enjoy Utopian home.  
Lagging behind in ruble amassed,  
Ruthless ruling to pay for the past.  
Festering wounds, getting infected,  
Soon nary a healthy cell is detected.  
Gangrenous limb must be removed,  
In order for the rest of the whole to be soothed.  
Extermination of the disease,  
Harmful acts never truly cease.  
Peace and calm try to remain,  
Until it all starts over again..

#1

Race for money,  
War for power.  
Conquest for vision,  
That greed devours.

Hoard all the wealth,  
Guard your gold well.  
Make a fine profit,  
From the souls that you sell.

Division of forces,  
Turn against your brother.  
Climb for your future,  
On the corpse of another.

Rape Mother Earth,  
Use her resources.  
Cash in her lifeblood,  
For your financial forces.

Kill your fellow man,  
Destroy his pleasure.  
Search his life,  
For your very own treasure.

Work your evil,  
Have your fun.  
And always look out,  
For old number one.

## **Mirror**

What are you?  
What do your eyes contain?  
What is that color called?  
What do your words mean?  
What is that thing with holes called?  
What's it there for?  
Is it supposed to be that big?  
What do those flaps do?  
Why does that one have a mark?  
What's this bushy stuff?  
Is it a disease?  
It looks like it's taking over your body.  
What do those things do?  
Can they really create?  
Do those creations matter?  
Why?  
How?  
Why does this look like it does?  
Why is it soft, and hard underneath?  
What do you keep in there?  
What is that for?  
Really?  
Why do you do it?  
What does it mean?  
How does it feel?  
Wow.  
And those?  
Ah.  
What about them?  
What's the lump for?  
And those wiggly things?  
The bushy stuff?  
What?  
Jesus, what a mess.  
What's underneath, that i cant see?  
What's inside?  
What's in there?  
What's it do?  
What are they?  
Why do they matter?  
Are they real?  
So....what are you, anyway?

*A Few Words on Life*

Midnight  
Daytime  
Lost, found  
Never  
Forever  
Hanging around  
Sighted  
Singing  
Watching the sound  
Teardrops  
Burning  
Extinguish their own flame  
Taken for granted  
Forgotten  
Absorbing all the shame  
Unwanted  
Annoying  
Neurotic and too rash  
Vacation  
Suicide  
Taking out the trash  
Scented  
Tasted  
Dark and making love  
Worthless  
Sorry  
Give me the shove  
Wishing  
Dreaming  
Asking knowledge  
Invisible  
Ignored  
Kindergarten at college  
Leading  
Dying  
Drop off a flower  
Weeping  
Crying  
Absolved of power  
Hated

Speculated  
Why in God's name  
Laughed at  
Hurt  
Never be the same  
Blue  
Sad  
Always the fucking same  
Choking  
Redundant  
Fucking prince of lame  
Old  
Tired  
Don't like the tone  
Bitter  
Hated  
Always been dying alone

## *The Priceless-ness of Innocence*

Innocence is a concept that has, in this past year, and especially in the past few months, been a source of great contemplation. I've been searching, everywhere I can think to look, for a good description of what innocence is, where it is, and when. I believed, up until a little while ago, that all of my innocence had been gone for some time. And, perhaps it was. Or, perhaps I just didn't understand the basics of what innocence really meant. I've come to believe that innocence is tied in deeply to faith. Not necessarily faith in the form of books, crosses, and holymen, but, faith in an idea, even if it's something as simple as trust in someone, or as childish as the act of finding games in the world around you. It's something that a person is full of upon birth, but dwindles, sadly, as life erodes some of the more naive beliefs, and hardships harden trust. Its something that, don't think, is lost forever, when it is gone, necessarily. I do think, however, it is far more difficult for someone who has lost their innocence to find it, to remember where it was, than for someone full of innocence to lose it. It's so common to see someone aged, worn and weary, without a speck of innocence. Looking at everything with a jaded eye, expecting the worst out of every situation. Daring only to hope a little, but keeping it in check with a good dose of reality, as they see it, choking the hope into something malformed, and almost indistinguishable as such. For a while, I started to allow myself to slip into that same pattern. Were it not for a picture I have in the small box that is my photo album, I may have lost my grip on innocence completely. It force me to think, though, and to question what innocence was, and what made it go away.

The picture is of a girlfriend I once had, Carol, as a young girl. The picture itself was taken the first day of kindergarten, and little Carol was so full of nervous curiosity that it actually seems to glow from the picture itself. The picture is, to me, the perfect example of innocence. Carol grew up to be troubled, mislead, perhaps. My relationship with her ended harshly, though not abruptly, and it was exposed that's he had been unfaithful numerous times. There was a lot of lying, cheating, anger, and crudeness involved, and it completely warped the image I had of her into something terrible. I don't know how many nights I stared

at pictures of her, wondering how that sweet girl turned into the one who had destroyed everything I had loved and believed in. I thought about what could have hurt her so, that she had taken to the ways she did, what caused her to make those sad decisions. Those thoughts filled a huge part of my time. What I discovered was that innocence wasn't something that was lost forever, it was faith. When someone loses their faith, they lose the ability to trust it completely, to let themselves fall freely into the arms of their belief. Someone who loses their faith that work is fun allows themselves to be caught in a dead end job that bores and depressed them. Someone who loses their faith in love goes through relationship after relationship, looking for the bad things, unhappy, and unsatisfied. Someone who loses their faith in the goodness of the common man lives in a city for years, never once approaching a stranger for a talk, or smiling at someone new on the street for no reason. Innocence is one of the few things that can be stolen, and almost always can be returned through hard work, and personal searching. Since all my thinking about the subject, I regained some of my own innocence. As I said, it is far more difficult to regain it than to lose it, but, the more that's regained, the easier it gets. I find myself these days, laughing at foolish things, enjoying the simplicity of making a kite on lunch break, and trying to fly it, or having a mock duel with Styrofoam. Innocence IS the fountain of youth, and it happens to be on tap whenever one happens to be really ready to work, and tap it.

5

Happiness is imagination;  
None of it is real  
Delusional insaturation,  
Numbing how you feel.

Dreams are picture wishes  
Showing you your desire.  
Serving you never-food dishes,  
Consuming you with fire.

Teasingly brief scenes  
Of being your own star.  
Don't know what it means  
To really go that far.

Tar pit theatres everywhere,  
Catching their fill of prey.  
Seeing what you want, going nowhere;  
It happens more everyday.

Want to live the dreams,  
And trade in my now.  
Possible as it seems,  
I have no idea how.

*Loser*

Escape from this place;  
Journey into outer space.  
Running away from only me,  
Terrified of what I see;  
A waste of flesh and bone.  
Should be sent away alone.  
Dragged off and left to die,  
Rotting under evil black sky.  
Sorry to all for being a load,  
Just a prince who got kissed back into a toad.  
Wandering around in disarray,  
Drowning in my own misery.  
If you want me gone, please just say it;  
You'll get rid of me someday, no need to delay it.

All Used Up

Tedium; lord it happened again  
The depression may hide but it'll always remain  
I try to fight  
And do what is right  
But I'm already half past sane

Confusion; why are things still the same  
As though darkness was in my name  
I changed my song  
Something went wrong  
And I just can't put out the flame

Sorrow; apology to those that I love  
And the one I dream of  
Didn't want you to get hurt  
Or soiled by my dirt  
Warned you to stay up above

Anger; God, I told you my mind  
Sought any peace we could find  
The more times I became sound  
The more you jerked me around  
Now I'm willing to leave you behind

Sadness; so tired of trying  
There's no more use in crying  
Give everything away  
And waste every day  
I'm not living as much as dying

Tomorrow; don't know what'll come  
It's scary as hell to some  
Afraid to fail  
To grow old and frail  
But to fear I will not succumb

*Always Me*

Always, often, all the time  
Forget, dismiss, push aside  
Crumple, rumple, Son of Sam  
Woeful, wasted, damndamndamn  
Never ever, fuck it all  
Money, food, rise & fall  
Starve, homeless, out of work  
Kill, conquer, impaled Turk  
Stomp, crush, destroy, kill  
Rob, rape, take your fill  
Smother, choke, dowse the flame  
Love, loose, curse the name  
Depression, sadness, painpainpain  
Lonely, worthless, in the rain  
Alcohol, drugs, miniskirts  
Underwear, heroin, low cut shirts  
Please, thank you, hope, desire  
Wanting, acting, forest-fire  
Words, nothing, paper roll  
Writing, thinking, creating, soul  
Paint, sleep, write, dream  
Hallucinate, masturbate, sew the seams  
Power, draining, hollow shell  
Spirit, faith, heaven, hell  
Fret, worry, blind, see  
Art, music, me me me

*A Need To Write*

How can I not stop and stare  
At a beautiful mass of reddish hair  
Innocent yet intelligent eyes  
A golden brown glory to make a heart rise  
Such soft skin to put clouds to shame  
And a body hotter than even hell's flame  
Heavenly artwork graces her skin  
Colors stolen from where rainbows begin  
Creating inside me a deep desire  
To hold on tightly to her fire  
Passionately hold her and show her love  
Share with her the things I dream of  
Make her every wish come true  
With each other whatever we do  
Wake up in the morning to see her face  
Best of an entire race  
A feeling so rare  
Life's never fair

Wouldn't hurt my true love  
Or cheat on her in vain  
But a shadow of my heart  
Makes me desire pain.

*Truth Amongst Lies*

Forest of the crystal  
Singing their glowing song  
Shining high into the sky  
A right to all that's wrong

Reflections of the golden world  
Where dreams always come true  
Everything you wish to be  
A greater more perfect you

Running through Elysium fields  
Telling tales of joy  
Bonding with eternity  
Life is but a toy

Ignore the times of impotence  
Forget the days of woe  
Loose the years of loneliness  
Things get better as you go

A lifetime is a pleasure  
Full of laughter and fun  
Just when you get tired  
The adventure has just begun

But bad things always happen  
And everybody dies  
Don't believe everything that you read  
It's often full of lies.

[The following was the opening I wrote for what I had, for years, intended to be my first book, which I called Flying Indoors. There are a thousand reasons you are not reading most of this in that book, but, all the same, in opening was nice.]

### *Method to My Personal Madness*

It's been said that the eyes are a window to the soul, and through them, you can see everything about a person. Who they are, what they think, and their pasts all open up, if you only know how to look right. Well, I hope to save you all a lot of trouble. That's why I decided to make this book. I want people to know about me; the real me. Who I am, why am, everything. Why do I want everyone to know who I am? Oh, there are a lot of reasons for that. Because for a lot of years, almost no one knew who I was. Because a lot of people have neglected to learn who I am. Because I've always been told that who I am is a wonderful person, who has a lot to give to the world. Or maybe its because I have a huge ego hiding inside me somewhere. Personally, I would put my money on a combination of all three.

See, when I was young, I wasn't what you would call popular. The only thing that everyone knew about me was that my name was Tye (or even "Tyelie" for a while, for some god-awful reason), and that it was always pretty easy to take advantage of me. Beyond that, the only people who knew more were my closest of friends, and myself, though not even I knew that much. Then, when I moved, I started asking myself who I was, and I didn't have a whole lot of answer. I spent a lot of time searching, and learned a lot. Admittedly, there is still a lot I don't know, but I'd like to think that I've got a pretty good grasp of who I am. Only problem was that after I found out who I was, I wasn't sure how to tell everyone else. Searching for myself had left me slightly behind in my public skills, so while I knew who I was, nobody else even had a clue. Everyone had some opinion of me already, and I didn't even know the first step in changing their minds. Eventually, I got to like being unknown, and independent. There were only two people who knew who I was, and that made me close to invulnerable. Unfortunately, invulnerability is lonely, and a desire for companionship was growing inside of me. It pushed me to find a partner of the fairer sex, with limited success. Then I

met a girl who changed a lot about the way I think. I met Carol. After being with her, I realized that I liked to have people know who I was, and if she liked me for who I was, then maybe other people would, too. And if the few people I showed liked my poems, then maybe a lot of people would. So I started getting this idea about publishing things about who I was; My artwork, and my poems, and my life stories. Then I decided, wait, I could put them all together. Create artwork to back up my poems, and combine them with stories about my life. I would make a book, about myself, which would let everyone who dared read it know who I was, and what I was all about. With that new thought in my head, I set out, and started my book. The very same book which you now hold in your hands. I certainly hope you enjoy my book, and if, when you have finished with it, you still don't like me, at least maybe you'll understand who I am.

*Untitled*

Do what you want,  
I wont get in the way.  
I won't end over backwards,  
No matter what you say.

Bribe all you want,  
Buy and sell your souls.  
Whisper conspiracies,  
On your grassy knolls.

Write the bible as you see fit,  
Disregard everything that you're told.  
Conquer your pesky conscience;  
Kill for dreams of silver and gold.

Disrespect your elders,  
Run over old ladies in the street.  
Do whatever it is you see fit,  
But you wont see me at your feet.

*Soft As A Kitten's Paw*

A kitty in the hand,  
And one in the bush.  
Love's in demand,  
But it needs a small push.

My kitty is sweet, and soft to the touch;  
She loves to curl up in my arms.  
I love my kitten very much,  
Never will it come to harm.

I care for her and keep her well;  
Give her all she needs;  
But she wants the finest things they sell,  
And is particular to when she feeds.

The kitty out on the grass is wild;  
Roaming and pouncing free.  
But her temperament seems soft and mild,  
Would that she might come to me.

Sleek and full of lightning's fire,  
A very attractive sight to see.  
Graceful as wind upon a wire,  
Her haunting desire wont let me be.

Both the kittens in need of love,  
Due to past owners sinful neglect.  
But which, of any, is ordained above;  
On this I should reflect.

But does either kitten want to be mine,  
Or would she wander to another's yard?  
Am I being ignorant and blind?  
Why is kitten shopping so hard?

*I ♥ Sex*

Cool round breasts  
Put to rest  
The fears inside;  
Makes 'em run and hide.

Soft smooth legs  
Stop what plagues,  
Mend what's broken;  
Slowly they open.

Inside, sweet and warm,  
Decimates swarms,  
Gives release;  
Causes much peace

A look in the eyes  
While inside the thighs  
Forms a halo above,  
Of gold and pure love.

## *King of the World*

In my safe, in a folder somewhere, I have a picture of me smiling, with my arms around a beautiful girl in shining black pants. Before that one, it was almost impossible to find a picture of me happy. It's not that I was never happy, it was just rather infrequent. That was before I found the girl who is in my arms there. Carol, whose birthday it was in that picture; she was modeling the vinyl pants I bought her. She was the most wonderful person I had ever met, and I loved her with everything that I was. She was the best thing that had ever happened to me, and I woke up every day thanking the gods that she was put on this earth. I was truly the happiest I've ever been in the time I was with her. Our relationship lasted seven months, which was both the longest and shortest segment of time I've ever experienced. It felt like such a long time to be with someone, and I felt like I had known her forever, yet it passed too quickly. Before I knew it, the whole relationship was gone, and I was left with an empty place inside me, and my memories. But what memories they are.

We did a whole lot, particularly in the beginning of our relationship. We went everywhere, and made every outing a trip for fun. I remember the first time I got to spend with her was at Fred Meyers, which isn't exactly a normal place for a first date. I can't even remember now exactly why we were there, but we were wandering around the store looking at everything. We must have been there for twenty minutes before either of us made any moves, but then, in perfect unison, we reached out for each other's hand. Now, I know it may not exactly be a thrilling act of steamy passion, but it made my heart soar. Before her, I had very limited experience with girls, and I was ecstatic that she felt something for me. For the rest of the week, we went shopping all over Vancouver and Portland. It took me a week to actually ask her out, and by that time I was fairly sure I was in love. It didn't take us long to explore new areas, both in where we went together, and physically. Within two weeks, I lost my virginity. We would spend the days talking, and going to new places. Finding new places to shop, new movies to see, new forms of entertainment. Then we'd spend the evenings going on walks all over town, picking up old cans for money, and we'd spend the nights being close, holding each other, or making love. I had a relationship like

I had always dreamed of, and I felt as though nothing could bring me down.

Eventually, something did. After all the happy times for seven months, we started drifting apart. She wouldn't communicate with me as much anymore, so I couldn't help her with whatever was bothering her. Her problems led to more problems, and we both got frustrated. I was trying to talk things out, and it seemed more and more that she was trying to avoid me. One day I went to her house between classes to try and work things out, because I was getting scared. When I got there, she had a friend over. She told me she needed to think before we talked, and she'd call me at four and we could talk then. When four came around, the phone surely did ring. I answered it, with my heart beating faster than it ever has before, and all she said was that she was sorry. I asked her if she was dumping me, and she said she had to. After that point, things were led out for a few more weeks, and eventually ended rather painfully. My happiness had left me, but not entirely. Even though she left me, I still have memories, most of which remain untainted and golden, which I hope I will have forever.

*“Yes, I’m out of work, thank you.”*

Some cultures place too much weight on work;  
They are only what they have earned.  
Occasionally someone wakes up to this life,  
As you will see one man learned.

He thought the world a machine-  
Fueled by hope and change-  
A scheduled life and daily regime,  
As like being bound by chains.

He worked his jobs for challenge  
(The money was pretty great, too).  
After awhile the money lost hold,  
It wasn’t worth what he had to do.

Convincing people and bending the truth,  
While he loved it and did well,  
The frighteningly fierce money lust  
Didn’t help his skills to excel.

For he was, at heart, an artist;  
A man of beauty and soul,  
Not one to cheat another for gold  
Like a common bridge-dwelling troll.

He thought “any fool can earn wages,  
And of this greed take part,  
But it takes some special people  
To work from the heart.”

He set out to find a new job  
Where he could do some good;  
Of course, a discourse from working  
Made it hard for him to buy food.

Tensions built on lack of cash  
Between his family and friends.  
His true love gave him a scare,  
Thus he tried to make amends.

He decided he was part wrong  
About lack of change being plain;  
While change is the spice of life  
Some things may always remain.

He figured out all jobs suck,  
But some were full of less greed.  
It seemed he needed money to live,  
And began looking for a job with speed.

Many a job fail to satisfy;  
They just can't make him stay.  
A decent job must be out there...  
Don't worry, he'll find it someday.

## I AM

Love the love

I am the love

I am the artist, the one who paints what you see

I am the writer, the ones who writes your dreams

I am the lover who holds you all night

I am the warrior who fights the good fight

I am the thinker who plans for your future

I am the teacher; your own personal tutor

I am the thief who steals your breath

I am the soldier who watches you rest

I am the angel who watches from the sky

I am the devil who tells you to lie

I am the schoolboy, who's lost in your eyes

I am the rebel who's inside your thighs

I am the dreamer who lives in the stars

I am the realist who grounds you where you are

I am the hobo you walk right by

I am the stud who catches your eye

I am the jerk you want to kill

I am the charmer who takes what he will

I am the fool who deserves your wrath

I am the wizard who guides your path

I am the reason for the choices you're makin'

I am the slumber from which you've awoken

I am the nomad; all alone

I am a gift; yours to own

I am never; the word you fear

I am eternity, year after year

I am the pain that riddles your past

I am the memories that always will last

I am the middle, below and above

I am myself, and you have my love

**Only in Dreams**

Dreams forever taken off to bright and misty lands  
Awaited by the giants with gleefully grabby hands  
Nocturnal cinemas to entertain during slumber  
Your fears and wishes come alive while you're sawing lumber  
Nightmares the personalized horror flicks render you asunder  
Euphoric dreams to come along and ease the strains your under  
Windows leading deep within to show what's going on inside  
Exposing every nook and cranny where secret thoughts reside  
Inner-self communications that come no matter if you fight  
Wait with bated breath for that you'll show yourself tonight

**Dedication:**

To Carol, my love, my bright shining star  
Your love will guide me close or afar  
I will always have reason to live so long as you care  
And I'll always have inspiration as long as you're there  
I wake up and think of you every single day  
I will love you always, more than words can say

**Return**

Starting over, a new life alone  
Pain and loss felt down to the bone  
But my love for her will last to the end  
Taking up the new role as a friend  
Begging and pleading for the gods to be kind  
To make sure my angel doesn't leave me behind  
For I love her with a fire that would shame the sun  
And I can't lose her this soon after we've just begun  
She sets the standard; there's no one better  
I never knew the things I did that upset her  
The darkness controlled me, not the reverse  
I'm glad that I learned that before I was heard  
And sometimes I wrote about things untrue  
Though not from my heart, just something to do  
My love, she knows the truth of the mistakes  
She says they aren't the reason for the time she takes  
She's scared and confused about her world  
Needs time to sort out the actions unfurled  
Still she cares deeply for me  
This she has said, and this I can see  
And despite what those with no hope say  
I have no doubt that she'll come back to me someday.

## *The Beat*

I think that everyone, at some point in their life, dreams of being a famous musician. I was no different. Since I as little, I had always wanted to play the guitar. Even as a wee little lad, I would sing in the bathtub, and play my air guitar to the tunes playing in my head. When I was fifteen, I decided that it was time to start working towards that dream. I rented myself a bass guitar, and started learning on my own. After I had been playing for about a month, I got a phone call from my friend, Tom. He asked if I had ever wanted to play drums. I said “Kinda, why?” He told me that his band needed a drummer, and they wanted me to do it. Well, far be it for me to turn down anyone who wants to spend more time with me, so I said I would look into it. I got some cheap sticks and a practice pad, and learned some basic rudiments. Then, after much talking, whining, and convincing, I got my mother to buy me a six hundred dollar drum set. As of then, I was the official drummer to the band Jade. Aside from being the guy who set the beat and tempo, I also supplied the other band members with a room to practice in, a storage place for their equipment, a video camera, and a whole lot of junk food.

We would get together a few times a week, set up, and mess around for up to six or eight hours at a time. Usually, during those six to eight hours, we would only play for about three of them. The rest of the time was filled with the lead singer and the bass player getting in fights, the rhythm guitar player eating gummy bears, and myself screwing around with the video camera. Every so often, we would take breaks for some photo shoots, or planning merchandising, or something else equally band-like. Looking back, I think we only had probably five songs that we could play more than once, and we only left my garage on three occasions, and it was always to the same place. We would pack everything up, and get someone’s mother to drive us down to the local music shop, where we would rent the practice room for a few hours. Then we’d pack everything back up, and go home, feeling like we accomplished something, and talking about playing big arena rock shows.

I remember the last time we went to the music store very clearly. It was an experience I’ll never forget. We had scheduled our practice time without clearing it with anyone’s parent, so we

had no one to drive us down. We sat around for hours trying to think of how we could get all our equipment four miles away and make it in time for practice. After a long debate, and a lot of persuasion on my part, we decided to walk, and carry our stuff. We compacted the drums, and wound all our wires as tight as we could. I rummaged around my house until I found some very large duffel bags, a few backpacks, and even a large wagon. The drums were balanced in the wagon, while the cymbals and other mechanics were all placed in the largest of the bags. Then the cords, and amps, and lyric sheets were all tossed in the remaining packs. Once we had loaded ourselves up as much as we possibly could, we started the long journey.

There must have been a lot of amused people that day, who watched as the four of us toted our equipment slowly down the road, stopping every once in a while to trade packs or re-balance the drums. Each mile we walked seemed like five, and we felt as though we would never make it. After what seemed like an hour of hauling this large burden, we were rescued. Our lead singer's mother saw us trucking along, and stopped to give us a ride the rest of the way. Even though we had only walked two miles, we were so exhausted that we could barely play for the entire time we had rented. Shortly after that day, our practices got shorter and shorter. Soon, we stopped playing altogether. We broke up, and everyone went their separate ways. The lead singer and bass player went on to form another band, the rhythm guitarist dropped out of school to work at KFC, and I was stuck with a drum set that took up half my room. Since then, I've sold the drums, and went back to bass myself, but I will always have the memory of being the drummer for Jade to stop me whenever I start dreaming too much about being a rockstar.

**If Only You Knew**

If only you knew how special you are  
So unique and one-of-a-kind  
The greatest thing in all the world  
Would that you were mine

If only you could see your beauty  
Unparalleled in my eye  
So gorgeous and perfect  
That it makes Heaven's angels cry

If you could only feel your power  
The strength that you can give  
No one could forget your grace  
For all the life they live

If only you knew your own wisdom  
You're of a whole different breed of sages  
So knowledgeable and wonderful  
I would talk to you for ages

If only you knew your enchantment  
Your love is my only desire  
Your perfection has lit within me  
A never ending pyre

If you only could see how I love you  
With such force ending never  
I hope you agree with my certainty  
That we're meant to be together

### *Love Will Wait Forever*

I know I haven't given you everything that you deserve  
Haven't always given credence to the desires I wish to serve  
I didn't always show you all the happiness I felt  
I wasn't always playing best the hand that I was dealt  
But my heart would soar to see you, and everything you do  
You are my greatest happy thought: this is always true  
Sometimes in the need for writing I would use another's name  
But it was never out of attraction, it's more of a game  
In order to flex the brain's muscle, I need an outlet  
I certainly never wanted for you to get upset  
I assumed that it was natural, and never thought it through  
But my heart's love and attraction exists only for you  
The jokes I made about being physical were never ever real  
I was trying to goad you into telling me how you feel  
I was never losing sight of my individuality  
I've spent a lot of time thinking and am pretty clear on "me"  
However, who I am doesn't think much of where I go to school or reside  
The thing that matters most to me is being by your side  
You are perfection, Luv, the best of the best  
And the passion and love I feel for you will never, ever rest  
I know you need some time to think, and pull your mental weeds  
I will be here as your best friend for everything you need  
And after you have cleared your head, and want to try again  
I will be here waiting; my love will remain  
Until then I have memories of your love and your soft touch  
Still, I hope it won't take really long, because I miss you so very much

**Love Will Ever be my Anchor**

||:Suitcase full of souls, fluttering towards the first speck of light with the grace and silence of a sentient cloud, brought to personify, empathize, embody, and soothe the pain and sorrow of others who dream forgotten and forbidden dreams, and seem an end to a path they never saw the beginning of, and were never aware that they were walking through, with a purpose which is invisible only until it is found, is useless only until it is used, and is worthless until it is recognized as the sole purpose of being, and existing in the:||

**Believe in Your Heart**

Reading

Thinking

Questions start

Advice

Teaching

Believe your heart

Faithful

Honest

Telling you facts

Loving

Attracted

Honoring pacts

Different

Truthful

Trying to search

Angelic

Ascended

High on a perch

Scared

Confused

Missing you

Thinking

Crying

She loves you, too

Waiting

Wishing

Want her back

Praying

Trying

Starting to crack

Calling

Planning

Spending time

Talking

Writing

Spinning rhyme

Love

Care

Never leave

Forever

Together  
Dreams you weave  
Broken  
Missing  
Can't be apart  
Lost  
Hoping  
Believe in your heart

**It's All Up To You**

Perfection isn't perfect unless you make it so  
Knowledge isn't helpful unless you know you know  
Feelings aren't supposed to make things easy, just help to guide  
Home is where you keep your soul, not where you reside  
Actions made honestly are never as mean  
Spilt milk will sit and spoil until you work to clean  
Life is a scary adventure from the moment that you're born  
To get the beauty from a rose you work around the thorns  
Waiting may be logical, but you never know when you'll die  
All your dreams are possible so long as you try  
Love cannot be turned on and off whenever it is best  
Trust is a two way street, you can't give it a rest  
You can't do a thing if you do what everyone says you should  
If something causes pain to all, it usually isn't good  
Everything you hear or read can be used as advice or tools  
Advice is often helpful, but only your heart can write the rules

[Not only did this girl come back, she came back like a bad outbreak of herpes. Saw her playing pool with somebody a few years back, and could see in his eyes that he was just starting down the road, not seeing the cliff at the end of it. Nobody sees the cliff.]

### *Small Town Princess*

Sometimes in life, there are people who seem to have a certain quality about them that you can neither describe, nor deny. It's usually someone who you've crossed paths with several times, and they make you feel a certain way; a feeling both good and bad, but that, no matter how hard you analyze it or try and change it, you still feel. Dalene Braves has been one of those people for me. She's popped in and out of my life many times since I first met her, and has been on my mind even more. My earliest memory of her goes back to what must have been the eighth grade.

In eighth grade, I was somewhat of a recluse. I had very few friends, never volunteered in class, and refused to speak with anyone during lunch. I was to the point where I wouldn't move, speak, or respond in any way to any form of outside stimuli at lunch, partially because I didn't want to, but mostly because I believed that I couldn't. While I was little more than a statue at the time, I was able to retain memories, and I have quite a few that year of Dalene. She was in my Science/Math class, and would occasionally make the effort to talk to me, or help me find a lab partner, which was rare for anyone to do. More importantly, while I was in a coma-like state every day at lunch, she would come to my table several times a week and talk to me. I never spoke in return, or even made much notice of her, but I appreciated that she would do this, and I would wait every day, and try to wish her over to my table, so I could hear her talk.

The next year, I had evolved to the point where I was able to speak, I just didn't do it well. I had a few more friends, and a few more social skills, but I lacked the courage to speak openly, engage in conversations, or meet new people. Again, I would usually spend most of my time silently alone, and again, Dalene would come breach my anti-social bubble and talk to me. She would often come sit near me in art class, and we would talk. Our conversations were never really deep, but for a young man who had such a small amount of social interaction, it was very special.

One day, I remember hearing that she had been sent away to a private school because her grades weren't what her parents had wanted, and I remember feeling very sad, but life does move on.

I didn't see her again until the next year, on the night of homecoming. She was close friends with my date for the evening, so we went to dinner and the dance with her and her date. Having never done anything of that sort before, I was extremely nervous, and unsure of what to do. Dalene once again came to the rescue, and went out of her way to make me feel comfortable, and to loosen up a little. At the dance itself, when our dates had both wandered off, she asked me to dance, which shocked me severely. I had never thought anyone would ever, in my life, desire to be close with me, and yet, she had asked me to dance. While we were dancing, I remember my head swirling with more feelings than I could describe at the time. I felt so warm, and happy being close to her, yet I didn't know how she felt. I was very attracted to her, but would she ever feel the same for me? I wanted the dance to last forever, but I didn't know what my own date would think if she saw me. Eventually, however, the night ended, as all things must, and I was left dreaming of what it might be like to be with Dalene.

After that night, I thought of her as more an angel than a person. She was one step above the rest of the world. Dalene, the princess of Washougal. Then I heard that she had been sent away to England, to live with relatives and focus on studies. I was shocked, and angry at her parents for sending her so far away from her friends. Even though we had never been close, I felt a loss of her being away. Again, the memories and feelings started to fade away, until the following year. I was working at Craft Warehouse one day, and She came wandering into the store, we talked, and she left, and I felt all the feelings and daydreams come back. When the quarter started at the college, she started riding with me to school a lot. We would talk on the phone, once even until one in the morning. The unexplainable attraction I felt became stronger than it had been before. Unfortunately, after the quarter ended, I didn't see her at school anymore. When I tried to call her, I was informed she no longer lived with her mother. Once again, she had dropped away, and I was left dismayed. I know she's still out there, though, and deep in my heart I know she'll return. With each encounter, my feelings have grown stronger, and I'm certain that someday, somehow, my I will get my wishes of being with

her. Until then, the past memories remain. Long live Princess Dalene.

**Slide On Back**

My love will last to the very end  
I cannot think of you just as a friend  
I want to be with you body and soul  
Mine is not to be in this unromantic role  
In need you in my life as a lover  
It's you I want, never another  
I wish for our futures to have a last name  
Yet our personalities remain the same  
I wish our presents to be together  
We can be young and in love through any weather  
We always made a perfect team  
I see you every night when I dream  
You're the only thing I think about  
My commitment to you is without a doubt  
Every promise I made I intend to keep  
I'm faithful even in the deepest sleep  
I wish to awaken to see your face  
To feel your peaceful, warm embrace  
I want to protect you for all time  
For you I'd give up every dime  
I want to make sure nothing is wrong  
I want you to hear every song  
I wish to be your one and only  
I never want for you to be lonely  
I want to make your every dream come true  
My only dream is to be with you  
I hope you know how much I care  
That everything I have is yours to share  
Someday soon I hope you see  
And, please, come back to me

*Wish You Were Here*

Sunrise on Seattle  
To a lively 80's beat  
Walking peacefully down  
A quiet suburban street  
Shopping for CD's  
Trying to find them cheap  
Driving for hours  
On very little sleep  
Spending time at home  
Lying on my floor  
Jumping at the phones ring  
Or a knocking at my door  
Thinking of the future  
For which I must plan  
Thinking up solutions  
To the problems at hand  
Thinking of that angel  
Her voice in everything I hear  
No matter where I am  
I wish you were here

**Love and Hate Born the Same**

Blood red veils for any fashion  
Love and hate are of the same passion  
As promises are turned to lies  
So loved ones are learned to despise  
You open up and share your heart  
True and honest from the start  
Believe that love was being returned  
While future plans were secretly burned  
Secrets being harbored and starting to fester  
Growing, malignant, and on their way to arrest her  
A love so perfect started to alter  
Fear and mistrust lead her feelings to falter  
Lies and deception, love was destroyed  
My one wish shattered, my emotions toyed  
Strung along, lied to, and often abused  
My faith and trust all gone and used  
The love I once felt became an illusion  
My endless joy became a distressing confusion  
I learned to hate the one who caused my strife  
Tossed in an ocean, tried to take my own life  
Claimed a flag of friendship with peace in a cup  
How can I trust her with things so fucked up?  
Yelling and angry, hateful words shared  
Caught up in the crossfire, little hope was spared  
Desire to trust her words felt to the bone  
But so many answers are still left unknown  
My feelings are full of passion unheard of  
But what do I feel, hate, or love?

***Knight in Shining Armor***

The voices of my heart do speak  
And tell my mind for whom to seek  
The princess will be in peril soon  
Probably before the next moon  
I need to be there by her side  
Helping her with very stride  
Protect her from coming to harm  
To keep her safe and sound and warm  
So sweet an angel is she  
Her nightmares should never be  
Hr heart should never let her sigh  
Out of sadness should she never cry  
She should only be surrounded by light  
Both eyes and a future bright  
My feelings I obviously cannot hide  
I'd walk through hell to be by her side

## Choices

Should I forge on ahead, fight the pain  
And ignore all the feelings that last?  
Or should I say my final farewell,  
And leave the heartbreak and confusion in the past?

Either way will hurt a great deal,  
And give me many troubled nights.  
But they both sound like reasonable paths,  
The logic has me dead to rights.

I care for her like no other,  
And have always tried to be her friend.  
But my feelings for her run deeper,  
And being without her hurts to no end.

To be so close yet far away  
Watching the pleasures which she attends  
Hearing about her trials and triumph  
Seeing her with her boyfriends

But I always want her to be in my life  
As I have since the day we first met  
Even through all the confusion and hurt  
There is little that I regret.

I love her more than I have loved before  
I promised I'd be by her side forever  
Giving up is something I just can't do  
And I don't break promises, ever.

So which course of action should I take?  
Which path should I follow?  
Both options sound very unpleasant  
Such bitter pain is hard to swallow

Good-byes don't have to last a lifetime  
Our friendship (or love) could always return  
But some time away might help me heal  
To try and soothe the painful burn

I still remember how it felt to be with her  
Some nights I think about it and cry  
I will never forget how wonderful I felt  
And I will love her until I die.

### *Hate Myself*

I hate myself now, for what you did to me  
I've long ago lost track of how this came to be  
I'm filled with a pain that nothing can relieve  
You lied, and cheated, and broke all that I believe  
Every time I close my eyes, the picture that I see  
You reveling in joy at the terrible things you've done to me  
I unknowingly let you toy with and control my very feelings  
The love I thought I gave you was really just you stealing  
Doing as you've done so many times before  
With all those other guys whom you pretended to adore  
How could you fake all the things we've shared?  
Pretending you loved me, and actually cared?  
Making me believe in you  
The things you dream, and plan, and do  
But it was never really there  
The whole damn time you didn't care  
Your crushed my every dream with your lie  
Broken and alone, I just want to die  
I hate myself for falling for you  
But don't you think I don't hate you, too

## *The Cost of Victory*

Good Versus Evil. It's a concept that's been alive since time was time: since the first men walked the earth. The ultimate of opposites. Dark and light, good and bad, high and low, rich and poor, happy and depressed. I've been fascinated by the concept for as long as I can remember. The idea that one thing was the bane of another was as deep as anything, and to this day I can spend hours sitting and thinking about it. Does one exist without the other? If you have light, then there will always be shadows, little holes of darkness. If you have money, there will always be someone with less, someone who has to work harder for what they do. Is it possible to abolish one extreme, and leave the other to remain? If everyone was stopped from being bad, would they really be good, or would they just be? Could you really love someone if you didn't know what it was like to hate, or would you just feel the same about everyone? As much as people, myself included, like to embrace one side of anything over another, we need the opposing side you make ours a side at all. If there were no sides, we would have nothing to fight for, nothing to believe in, and nothing to learn. Everything would just be. There would be no sin to preach against, no rights to struggle for, no desires to work towards. Is this, then, the price of the greatest peace? To lose all individuality, and the very center of what makes people who they are? What's better, then, to embrace creativity, and the chaos it brings, or to live in perfect serenity, and never know what it feels like to be unique?

***This Too Shall Pass***

Hope of a new day  
Of a feeling for tomorrow  
To be rid of the misery  
And done with he sorrow

Wishes of another love  
Faithful, true, and strong  
Someone who I can trust  
And with whom I belong

Forging through the pain  
Heal the wounds and mend the bone  
Stay strong and surefooted  
You won't always be alone

Occupy the mind  
Keep busy to stop the visions  
Eventually they'll pass  
Further away with all good decisions

Stick closely with your friends  
The ones who really are there  
No matter what you went through  
Good friends will always care

Try your best to be a good person  
(Though impossible for some)  
For tomorrow is another day  
And true love will eventually come

6-1-99

There's so much I want to say  
And want for you to hear  
But I couldn't even make a sound  
Fighting back the tears

I know that you're afraid inside  
And you've been hurt many times  
And life never turns out  
The way it does in nursery rhymes

The pain we endure may scar  
But it helps to shape our lives  
It makes us who we are inside  
And fuels you to what you strive

I can't remember a single time  
When I didn't care about you  
And it's hard to understand  
But I know this to be true

You are the most special person  
I could ever hope to find  
And who you are is wonderful  
You can leave the past behind

Nothing has ever felt so right  
As holding you in my arms  
And I knew for certain  
I never want you to come to harm

Opening up is risky  
And before it's got you hurt  
You trusted him with everything  
You left feeling like dirt

You're familiar with what it feels like  
To be all alone  
The cold air that surrounds  
And chills you to the bone

Walking alone in the rain  
Nobody catches you when you fall  
And when you're in a crowded room  
There's no one there at all

You should never have to be alone  
Or left out in the cold  
By yourself in a room  
Growing lonely, growing old

I will never desert you  
Not in a million years  
I will be there to keep you warm  
And to wipe away your tears

And while you've heard the words before  
And your wishes didn't come true  
There's nothing that isn't real  
About the way I feel for you

I will always be here to listen  
When you need to share your heart  
And I am truly thinking of you  
When we are apart

I've thought long and hard about you  
In every single way  
The feeling I came up with  
I'm too afraid to say

I'm afraid of scaring you more  
And pushing you away  
Because all I really want  
Is for you to stay

Yes, Dalene, I do care  
And I understand how you feel  
And the promises I'm making  
Are very, very real

I promise I won't abandon you  
And leave you by yourself  
I promise I won't lie to you  
In order to save myself

I promise I won't hurt you  
If I can avoid it in any way  
And I promise you will be there  
Every single day

I promise I'll protect you  
From any threat around  
I promise you I'll always try  
And I'll never let you down

I promise you I'll be a friend  
And I'll always care  
And I promise that if you want me  
I'll most certainly be there

Things won't always be as grim  
As they seem to be  
Someday you'll have happiness  
Far as the eye can see

Until then you need a shoulder  
On which you can cry  
And someone you can trust  
To never tell you a lie

I want to be there for you  
To help you face the day  
And I want to be in life with you  
More than words can say

I know that since I've these feelings for you  
Things will never be the same  
My heart is riddled with worry and care  
And every beat screams your name

## *Dreamscapes*

Mask fitting so tightly  
Even the best of friends don't know  
The things that I see nightly  
But never want to show

Nightmares of the worst fashion  
Playing on my fears  
Twisting and killing every passion  
Until I wake in tears

But the waking world holds no protection  
The visions haunt me still  
Cursing me with mental deceptions  
Of those they claim to kill

Slaughtered by the man in the mask  
That nobody else can see  
And when he finishes his task  
He reveals himself as me

Staring into my own cold eyes  
And the madness held within  
Watching my mouth spew forth lies  
About how I caused all this sin

Blood drips from his shadowy form  
The blood of those I loved  
He has long since extinguished anything warm  
And left me alone, ungloved

Chained up inside my own mind  
Left alone in the dark with my pain  
Until the man in black sneaks up behind  
Ready to kill them all again

I try to close my eyes and yell  
I try to get up and fight  
I can't escape my personal hell  
It comes again each night

I shake in terror when I think  
About who the man will take  
I find a book and something to drink  
And try to stay awake

I fall asleep in the end  
But the dark man isn't there  
Instead I'm walking with a friend  
With gorgeous eyes and flowing hair

Hand in hand we stroll the night  
What could be better than this?  
We stop at every wondrous sight  
She leans in for a kiss

A shout comes out of the shadows  
Followed by a group of guys  
All very much angry and morose  
With dark intentions in their eyes

They make a move toward my friend;  
I step in to intercede  
I try to make the troubles end  
But they fall deaf as I plead

Violence erupts in a flash  
I cannot fight them all  
I yell for my friend to dash  
But watch in horror as she falls

I tear through the pigs in rage  
They die for their intent  
But more keep on coming  
And its something I cannot prevent

Her blood and lust is what they're after  
I hear her scream through her tears  
And I hear the dark mans laughter  
Ringing in my ears

My eyes are red, my face is pale  
But I fear to close my eyes  
So many dreams like a fairytale  
Where everybody dies

Perhaps a light I'm soon to see  
Will come and set my dreamscapes right  
Mask smashed by one who cares for me  
And holds me tight all through the night.

[This is the kind of thing that happens when someone who doesn't have a lot of experience being among people tries to cheer one up. It was the first thing, I think, I wrote deliberately for someone that wasn't poetry and wasn't intended to make them want me. A sort of fictionalized view of the world. It did not have the desired effect, and only led to problems. I learned a lesson or two, although I can't say how well they stuck.]

### *Deliberate Nonsense*

Some things aren't really real until they've been written down. That's my opinion, anyway. Then again, I shave my toes, and not only own, but wear on occasion, a kilt. Things are normal for me that aren't for others, and need no special explanation, or condition. Perhaps it's just another facet of being an eccentric artist. Or perhaps making an idea exist in the physical world, open for all to read, makes it undeniable. But, whatever its reason, truth it is. Then this will be the official record, the realization, of at least one, and probably more, of my personal feelings.

Feelings. What an odd concept. Really. I mean, it's an idea that everyone, with the possible exception of coma patients and infants, understands, and interprets in a different way. For a long time, I thought of feelings as only being physical stimulus. Pain, hunger, hot, cold. Emotions were as foreign to me as Arabic, or driving on the left side of the road. It was conceivable, at least, that I could feel something that was touching me, but emotionally, spiritually, it was laughable. Or would have been, if laughter was not the response of another emotion. It may sound made up; a delusion of fiction, that I once believed myself to be without emotion, but, it's the truth. I recognized no emotion. I actually believed that I was unable to feel, which spread, gradually, until I had lost all reaction to pretty much everything. See, logically, in order to interact with someone, I would have to have empathy, or even sympathy, both emotions, which were beyond me. To move around, one has to have desires to move, and motivation. More emotions. So, without a direction, an order, I did nothing, because I honestly, to the bottom of my soul, thought I couldn't. For almost a year, I sat, in a self-inflicted coma, at school, at home, everywhere, completely turned off to the world outside of myself,

simply because I knew (or thought I knew) that I was unable to feel. It was a time I spent exploring my mind. I made up games, made up places to go. Concentrated until I could make the pattern on a tabletop in a school cafeteria come alive, and take any shape I wanted. I could control my heart rate, my breathing, my adrenaline release, and I could dilate my own pupils by thinking about it. But, in all that time, I never said anything to anyone if I didn't absolutely have to. That didn't stop everyone from speaking to me, however.

In the time I refer to as the "coma year," I had many encounters with schoolmates, and teachers, who thought to come explore the limits of the living statue that sat in the school lunchroom. Most of them were curious bystanders; people who came to try to shake me out of my trance. I swear, it was like the sword in the stone, everybody available coming to try, at least once, to get me to respond. None succeeded. Not directly, anyway. While most of the watchers were an annoyance, and were blocked out immediately, a special few I waited for, patiently, secretly hoping they'd come to talk to me. (I didn't realize, at the time, that the fact that I was wishing them over, listening so attentively to their words, cherishing every one, that I was experiencing emotion.) Of these special visitors there were only a handful. One was my oldest, and only, friend, Todd, whom I had known for many years. Then there was Moon, and Courtney, who sat nearby, and were just enjoyable to talk to. I also usually welcomed my own "circle of friends," even though I rarely saw them, and spoke to them less. Then there was Nell. Nell was incredible. She was probably the most incredible person I had ever met. Beautiful: the kind of gorgeous that almost shouldn't even exist in the real world, because nothing can compare to it, yet, at the same time, everything is better for being near to it. As though it was some kind of magical light, and everywhere the light touched was that much more special. She was kind. Kind enough, even, to sit, time after time, and talk to a guy rarely even blinked when she was around, and never spoke. Friendly, warm, compassionate, curious. All in all fascinating. Oh, God, how I wanted to say something back, but, even if I had thought I could talk, what would a kid like me (or the me I used to see myself as) ever have to say to a girl like her? I thought that I was proof of humanities illness, and all that was wrong, but Nell, she was everything that was right. So what right did I have? But, all the same, I felt better about myself

anytime she was around, because, even if I was completely horrible, she was still taking the time to sit and talk with me. It was important to me.

Time passed. I grew, I changed, and I learned that I was, in fact, human, and could actually feel. What a revelation it was. There was so much to learn, and explore. Without the coma, I actually saw less of my classmates. I was no longer a scientific wonder, I was just a common loser. With that came an abundance of free weekends, and the very real possibility that I could die without ever once having a girlfriend. I no longer saw Nell anymore, aside from in passing. Now, I knew how to feel, but I also knew that I would never be allowed to have any feelings for her. I was one of the losers. There was nothing that I had that a sports star couldn't beat me up to take, and no part of my personality that couldn't be overshadowed by the ability to be "cool." It was foolish, it was wrong, but, in my mind, it was fact. I dealt with it as such, accepting it, but certainly not happily.

The acceptance got easier, and, before long, I had left the high school to pursue other scholastic interests. I only saw Nell around town, in glimpses. I found new interests, new people, new relationships, new areas to explore. Learned that I had really turned into someone I liked being. She was eventually pushed to the back of my mind, surfacing now and then, but going back when the daydreams or memories were over. Then, not long ago, someone brought up her name. I asked, to see how she was doing these days, and I was told that things weren't going well for her, lately. I was concerned, because, even though I never really knew her, personally, I did know enough about her to know that she deserved to be happy, to not suffer. She was as good and pure a person as any. I decided to send a message, a thank you gift, because, even if things weren't bad, it'd be great to know that I had made someone happy. So, I did, and that was that. What more could a relative stranger do? I was risking being beat by any boyfriend that may exist, just to say thank you, and to do something special. I had done all I figured I could do.

Then I realized that the thoughts weren't going away. Not even a little bit. I made a discovery, which I'd like to share. I discovered that there was this girl who had, without me knowing it, proven to not just be special, but to be phenomenal. She was gorgeous, to the point where nobody could even come close. She was kind enough to have made a difference at a time when I didn't

believe anyone could affect me at all. She had an aura, a presence, greater than anyone I'd ever met, potent enough to make me think about her for weeks on end. Not just in the daytime, but at night. Not the common sort of dreams, but dreams of blissful happiness of the purest sort. Dreams of laughing, and talking, gentle embraces. Dreams of spending an eternity together, which has never happened with anyone, even when in the middle of a relationship, in which I was completely in love and devoted. Dreams where, even if we looked as though we were going to be making love, I'd wake up, not out of fear, or anxiety, but out of respect, because it wasn't my place to be that intimate, without consent. Dreams and thoughts that made me entirely happy, with only the slightest hint of sadness from the fact that this person who had done all this, given me this strong an instinctual feeling, was one I had not spoken to or seen in quite a while. Someone who I didn't know would even remember me, whether she would want to, whether or not she had a love in her life. I knew nothing, except that she was wonderful, and I'd do anything for her. And now, as I sit, telling the story, I know no more. Except that things left unsaid are the worst curse of them all. That's why, Nell, if you've read this, I hope you understand why I wrote it. Why I had to put in writing everything I felt. Because even if I never see you again, never hear from you, you'll know that I cared, that I thought you were special. That, at any time, had you come to me, and opened your heart, I would have given my all to make you happy. I wanted you to know. And I wanted it to be real. So, here it is. The entire story. Not just in my mind, anymore, but a permanent part of the world. Emotion brought to life. Life, emotion, to be shared, as I think they are meant to be.

### *Only Booze Improves With Age*

Crossed out squares of a calendar, and pages on the floor  
The days and years, they pass away, but there always seems to be more  
Everything alive branded with the date of it's birth  
And the days added up from that to this determines it's worth  
The years are displayed before them as they're auctioned on a stage  
Open for all to judge based solely upon their age  
Why must it be that years bring worth, no matter how they're used?  
When surely there are any whose time has been abused.  
So many qualities, it seems, which should take precedence  
That the way things are done right now just doesn't make much sense  
The years of ones existence is simply the circling of the sun  
While they should be judged upon who they are and what they've done  
Time is but a trifle, gauged with days and years  
While intelligence and soul is what finds one their peers  
Responsibility in the challenges they face  
They're compassion and understanding of the human race  
The knowledge and sense at the world in which they live  
And the focus on the purpose towards what they have to give  
A soul can spend a thousand years, and not explore itself  
Yet another can spend a dozen and understand its wealth  
And while wisdom tends to grow in strength with every passing year  
Its not to say the young cannot be wise from things they do and hear  
So if you should meet someone you think to be a child at play  
You might think about the things they've faced in their day  
And while they might not have quite the years that you've amassed  
It doesn't mean that they don't have the same experience from their past

### *Crystal Ball*

Today spawns from tomorrow, and all that has gone before  
Hopes and aspirations lie broken on the floor  
You lived your life in the minute, the future far away  
Who cares about tomorrow when there's so much to do today  
You've got your share of problems, as everybody does  
So why not get away from them, and at the same time, catch a buzz?  
It makes sense to think that drinking is the best way to avoid your pain  
It keeps you numb enough to laugh, and avoid hurting all over again  
But the party can't go on forever, and the pain will not just leave  
You see, pain likes to fester, and taint everything you believe  
The only way to stop it is to confront it face to face  
To show it you won't back down until its gone without a trace  
You see, you've got a lot to live for, now, a long life ahead  
A future full of dreams and hopes, the daydreams in your head  
Senior year is on you now, and college beyond  
But success takes work and wariness, not just a magic wand  
Drinking does destroy you, and your friends, they are concerned  
They know the things that drinking does,

from the lessons they have learned

Today spawns from tomorrow, and all that has gone before  
Hopes and aspirations lie shattered on the floor  
You lived your life in the now, the futures always there  
With all the fun you're having, why should tomorrow care?  
But, please, my friend, I beg you, don't throw your life away  
Don't sacrifice your future for the party life today

### *If Evermore*

If I told you I loved you, what would you do?  
Would you kiss me or walk out the door?  
If I held you to me and kissed you with passion  
Would you slap me or lean in for more?

If you looked in the mirror, what would you see?  
A whore, or a heavenly saint?  
If you found the beauty you held inside  
Would you try to wash of the taint?

If your soul broke free and showed you your mate  
Would you embrace him or turn and run?  
If he was a part of your life would you embrace him  
Or pass him up for a cheap brand of fun

If the pain from the past was revealed in the now,  
Would you fight it or move past the tears?  
If a hand was outstretched to you would you push it away,  
Or hold onto it through the years

When the someday occurs and you look on your life,  
Will you learn, or sob in shame  
And when your mind's eye shows you the one whom you loved  
Will you ignore it or call out his name?

When you're future is close, and you're tomorrow is now,  
Who will you want by your side?  
When the dark clouds gather and the rain falls,  
Will you face it or run inside

If I came to your thoughts and you wanted to talk,  
Would you call me or just play pretend?  
If your heart found it would you pressure it still,  
Or give it time to mend?

What will you do when you're future is now  
And your past brings a sting to your eyes  
What will you do when your heart is alone  
And afraid, because of your lies

At the end of the day when you're alone with our thoughts,  
What plans do you make?  
And when you awake and the day is so bright,  
What decisions will you take

If I told you I still love you, what would you do,  
Would you run to my arms or the door?  
If I wrapped you up in my arms and kissed away harm,  
Would you hate me, or love me evermore?

**Deep Breath**

Glitter and fairy dust  
Dreams that will never rust  
A twinkle in her eye  
A refusal to lie  
Modest self-confidence  
Priorities in precedence  
One of a kind  
A magnificent find  
Chocolate covered gold  
Never gets old  
A warm caring smile  
Gleaming for miles  
Saintly in part  
But the thief of my heart  
A bright shining star  
You know who you are

*Here I Sit*

I sit with paper, pen in hand  
Writing about you  
Because my insides want, nay, demand  
That one short poem won't do

I like to think a lot, you see  
All day and most the night  
About what is, what isn't, what should be  
And if these things are right

Recently it's occurred to me  
You're often on my mind  
So it's become my goal to see  
What reasons I can find

I know I have a thing for you  
What you could call a crush  
Normally those don't control what I do  
Or give me such a rush

But it inspired me to write  
Spinning you a rhyme  
And to put together this night  
In very little time

So, what is it that's got me?  
How did I get caught?  
I know I wasn't searching  
So how can answers be sought?

You certainly are enchanting  
No doubt about that  
The spells that you are casting  
Have me purring like a cat

You've got those awesome eyes  
That twinkle like a stream  
They show your soul to size  
Yet shimmer like a dream

And your voice is very cool  
It shows a massive strength  
Which, of course, is a rule  
If you want to last at length

The glittering of your smile  
The way you walk with pride  
The way you don't defile  
Who you are inside

So many things to ponder  
I'd be writing here forever  
So is it any wonder  
I'm in this endeavor?

I hope that you believe it  
Though this is corny, true  
And I hope that you can see  
That I do care for you

## Listless in Berlin

It's Wednesday. The, uh...4<sup>th</sup> day of my vacation. The halfway point. I have 3 more to go. Leave Sunday morning. Things aren't looking as up as they should be. Should, that is, in my mind, as that this is my escape, my vacation. This is perhaps...the product of my own mind. Maybe my own imagination, the artist's mind, is too vivid and active for the real world to ever live up to it. Perhaps I create more wonderful, expansive scenarios than any world could handle. I'm reeling, physically, spinning in my mind, the sense of falling forward forever, because of some unknown pressure in my skull. This has been a low point, which disturbs me, because I NEED escape. In Germany, I found a standup bass for 700 marks (the equivalent of about 350 dollars). The average rate for one at home is 1500. And tats for a smaller sized one than this. This was taller than myself, solid wood, good shape. Needed new strings, but, aside from that, was wonderfully often played. And for so cheap. I was bound by my lack of language to allow others to make arrangements for me, such as shipping. The search turned up the following results: it would be 500 marks to send it to America, cheapest (which is incorrect, because they did not know he size, and guessed from an average cello size), it would have a 25 percent duty tax, and id have to pay a shipping company to pack it, which would be relatively expensive. And overall, it'd be cheaper to buy one in the states. (no, still cheaper by at least 600, but, I could not defend this, because I don't speak the language. I'm handi-fucking-capped and this fucking computer isn't helping). So, the choice was made that, no, I wouldn't be getting this bass. No mater how much I wanted it, or had wanted one for however long.

A second disappointment was the fact that I was misinformed, on numerous occasions, about the cost of piercing ones eyebrow. This is something I have wanted for three years, I have long considered it a good thing, something...nice, to have. I've been someone with an eyebrow piercing all along, just not a physical one. But, I was told it was 10 mark to get it done, and I could bring my own piercing, to avoid ending up with a dumb-ass looking ring and ball that is seemingly everywhere. When arriving at the parlor, I was informed by the burly tattoo man that it was, in fact, 70 mark to get the piercing, and what I had was not going to

work at all, so, fuck. So I had a choice between one of his, all silver balls, all 30 marks. I refused to pay that, and left. I spent an entire day on the German streets, and all I did was buy dinner at burger king. I could not just wander, because I don't know the language, I couldn't FIND the things I wanted to see because I cant read the language, or the maps, or ask for directions, and I am tossed at the will of an overemotional judgmental girl who is actually making this vacation harder.

When planning a trip, I was thinking that I would like to be able to be away, to be myself, to explore a new place. I figured if I came here, then it wouldn't matter that I didn't speak the language, because I knew someone who spoke both languages, and would give me space. I could have a place of my own, to relax, to read, wrote, whatever I wanted, I could venture out on my own a little, and, relax. Unwind. Calm down from my normal life and stresses. From a family which tries too hard, and energizes too little. From a lack of decent friendship. From a loneliness which is there regardless of action or effort. From a job that is being ripped out from under my seat, and changing in the walls around me. From where my art is pushed on the back burner by the rest of the world, and ignored by those I wish could see it.

The only writing I've done is late at night, before I sleep, and is nothing I'd be able to call...to consider a vacations rest. It's as vented as everything from before. The mind is nowhere near clear enough to begin a story. My family was replaced by another, whose language I don't understand, but who are just as willing, if not more so, to plan my vacation. I am in this city, this place, where everything is beautiful, and vast. Subways, busses, people going about life, a story behind everything, from graffiti to the cars on the street to the buildings that stretch into the clear sky. Old, new, designs of every kind, the buildings in this place, the bahn stations, everything, is so wonderful. I could spend days just traveling around on the bahns, watching people going where they're going. Meeting new people, listening to their stories, and moving on. But...I cant. I can neither speak, nor wander about all day on my own. I trapped. As trapped as I've ever been

I was also told today that I'd never like anyone. No people in my life. I'd be lonely forever. I don't believe that to be true. I only I'd for a half second. There are people, wonderful people. People who get more beautiful the more you know about them. I know there are. I don't doubt it, now. I jut need, special people.

Anyone is someone that I can be around for awhile. But, to be around forever, takes special people. I'll find them. Someday.

Now I'm sitting, in an apartment that is the closest thing I've had to my own place, yet so far from me, in a city that is an endless barrel of inspiration which I am unable to tap. Bound by obligation and circumstance to a molded vacation, not really mine at all, but scrapped together from someone else's. I'm just a body, wearing the days around me like ill-fitting clothes.

I dread my vacation carrying on longer, yet, at the same time, I dread returning home. These places are less violent, less trouble. Less personal bounds. But, I am locked in ignorance, an lack of knowledge, which I cannot escape. I don't want to return to that same job, that same life. But, I am unable to stay here, either. I have to float. I have to wait. Be patient. Try and last until I am given an opportunity to break free. It makes me want to jump from the tallest of these German buildings, and fall, clean through the floor of his very world, into a place where I have no bounds, not even by physical form, into eternity.

**Do You Suppose?**

If in the dream tomorrow spoke  
What do you suppose it would say?  
Would it laugh out loud at some cosmic joke,  
Or warn you about what you did today?

Would it lecture about the lies you told?  
Compliment you on a job well done?  
Or rather, would it relate stories of old  
And chat until the rising sun

If in the mirror you talked to yourself  
What do you suppose you'd learn?  
Would you remember emotions stored on the back shelf  
Or rekindle old passions that burn

Would you open your eyes to the truths you hold  
The beauty you never saw there?  
Or would you maybe ignore what's yours to mold  
Pretending you don't really care

If while you were walking the earth woke up  
What do you suppose it would do?  
Would it ask you why it's so messed up?  
Would it blame the problem on you?

Maybe it'd weep the islands away  
At how it's been destroyed  
Or maybe it'd marvel all night and day  
At all that's been built to fill the void

If while you were reading this poem came alive  
What do you suppose you'd think?  
That the waiting is over for your lord to arrive,  
Or that you've had too much to drink

Would you say my writing is a piece of art  
To be honored and carved in stone wall  
Would my words strike you right in the heart  
Or would you even care at all?

### *Photo Albums*

Vicious hunger  
Biting  
Gnawing  
Like an acid burning slowly  
A metal trunk  
Full of memories  
Photo albums of the past  
Pain, sorrow  
Joy  
Jars of tears caught  
Like butterflies  
In times of happiness so bright  
That the only way to express it  
The only way  
Was to shed tears  
And next to them, glass bottles  
Full of more tears,  
Shed in times of loneliness and anguish  
So acrid  
That hours of crying still wasn't enough  
To expel these feelings from inside  
Canisters of blood lie next to the bottles  
From those times  
From the times  
Razors floating in there like fruit in Jell-O molds  
As cold as the day they were drawn  
Across warm flesh  
And washed with red, red blood  
Under these are the cassettes  
Home movies of happier times  
Some of them very plain  
Every day activities speckled with laughter and smiles  
Some are moments of time  
That seemed so incredible that they couldn't possibly be real  
Hollywood productions where all the faces are familiar  
Those unforgettable days, and enchanting nights  
The trunk is scattered with photos  
Fallen free of albums, were they ever there at all  
And articles of clothing

A T-shirt worn on the first day of real life  
An undergarment worn in the never-patient passion  
Wrought between lovers  
Or left behind in the glow of residuous love  
A pair of shoes worn on long walks  
Collecting cans and counting stars  
Always looking for a new direction  
And at the very bottom is a small box  
Wooden and hand-carved  
Simple, but containing torrents of energy & feelings  
Kisses long and sweet  
Embraces that never should have ended  
The pacifying comfort of knowing  
Down every path, through every door, love follows  
As soft as the whispers from a lovers lips  
As strong as the steel bridges that connects souls  
As meaningful as every thought since birth  
And with the permanence of the stars  
But, like the stars, often bummed out long  
Before the light has stopped being received  
This is what the hunger is after  
Tearing at this trunk with fury and vengeance,  
Trying to detach the memories  
The pictures and movies  
Every trinket of the past  
To suck down the light  
Blinding and pure  
From the simple hand carved box  
And will not stop  
Will not slow for even a heartbeat  
Until this hunger has been fed  
Those feelings have been released  
And love flows like the never-ending currents  
Of the world's oldest rivers.

## *You Are Here*

Colors flashing like an acid trip  
Or the 4th of July  
Or the spots you see  
After getting hit on the head  
But it's nothing like that  
Even a massive head injury would be better  
At least then the pain eventually goes away  
Or you die mercifully without much struggle

Shrill sounds tear through the air  
The dorsal fin of a Mako shark, cutting the ocean in two  
Screams like the whining guitars and vocals of a rock concert  
But those are happy things  
While they may leave you with a ring  
Like a broken fire alarm,  
Or a bite mark  
They are life, in its purest form

Pressure pushes in from all sides  
Not like a warm embrace from a friend  
Or the weight of a lover pressing down on you  
Not heartening or loving, like the rays of the sun  
But cold and even like the ocean  
When you've sunk to where the light can no longer reach  
As though something is trying to wad you into a ball  
And throw you away

Einstein said that doing something wonderful for an hour  
felt like a second  
But doing something terrible for a second felt an eternity  
But this, this is eternity  
An eternity of eternities, end to end, and on top of each other  
Alone in a crowd on nothings, packed shoulder to shoulder  
Feeling suffocation, and pain  
Pain of a million deaths, but without dying  
And though the exits are clearly marked, the crowd blocks you from  
them

Never can you leave  
Never will you be set free  
Never will it quiet down  
Never does the pain end...Until

*Tangential*

Who am I to feel this way?  
To sit and dream my life away?  
Always feeling odd man out  
Yet never run to join or shout  
Looking for someone I can love  
Without knowing who I'm thinking of  
Specialty of nothing much  
Tainting everything I touch  
Lock self away, swallow the key  
Oh, will my dreams ever be?  
That girl, out there, dressed in blue  
Beautiful from soul to shoe  
Smiling to melt the arctic winds  
Proprietor of a house of sins  
Yet these are not close to fact  
Perhaps just a clever act  
Probably someone else deep down  
Using that smile to hide a frown  
Hurting and bleeding in the snow  
Wondering: where did my happy thoughts go?  
But, anyhow, I haven't a clue  
Don't know if a word is true  
All I know is I'm starting to dig her  
Words and thoughts; a rushing river  
Playtime, worktime, whose to say?  
Craziness lies in the day  
No words can guess the futures hand  
Snapping like a rubber band  
But its time to get back to the floor  
To smile, and work, and dream of her some more

### *The Entertainer*

Carny music plays  
Lights flash  
I'm standing on the stars, yet I'm on solid ground  
Solid  
Solid as a bigoted thought  
Solid as a desert fault-line  
Breaking away  
Sending me  
Falling...  
Sprawling...  
Panic on my face  
The music still plays.  
An endless echo of organs and electric beeps  
Dozens of songs in dozens of tunes  
All happy melodies  
Cheery  
But when played all on top of each other  
They twist  
Into a pulsating static  
When, when heard closer,  
Is more like a laugh  
An evil laugh  
Spawned from an evil clown  
Pennywise  
Or from Lucifer himself  
Satan, in clown makeup  
Spinning clown heads, like the  
Shooting stars under my feet  
And there's an angel here  
Not the singing kind of angel  
Though her voice is welcome  
And could pierce the darkness  
A brilliant energy  
From the gorgeous lips  
Unsmiling, yet golden and beautiful  
And when they do smile  
The angelic nature is exposed  
To the blinding, aching beauty  
Shreds the darkness  
Makes the ground solid again

Drives a stake through Lucifer's clown  
And the music  
That evil carny music  
Becomes a chorus of angels  
Seraphim's dream  
Because of a smile  
The undying power of an angel  
Guarding an unholy place  
Undercover  
Unsmiling  
But the power is there  
One day, she will release it  
Release the loving grace she holds  
One day  
Until then the music plays  
Onward  
Forever

## *Humanity on Trial*

One thing that I doubt I'll ever be used to, certainly hope I won't be, is the crimes and cruelty humanity can inflict on itself. Even though I have, for as long as I can remember, had countless nightmares involving ghastly and horrific things, they are still dreams. The product of one fevered mind, which, however real they may be to me, have no hold on the waking world. There are no records of the horrors I've seen unfold in my own mind. I wish to high heaven that the same was true about the real world. Unfortunately, there are so many blemishes, infested wounds, throughout history, from instances of cruelty. Further back even than was ever recorded, there was slavery and hate crimes. Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, the Nazis, the slavery of the United States in the south. None of it ever seemed so real as when I went to Germany, though. Part of my vacation, a part I was very adamant about, was visiting a concentration camp. I felt it was important, almost like it was my duty as a human being, to see, firsthand, the place where some of the world's greatest atrocities were carried out. It was intense as anything I've ever experienced. Walking on a ground that had seen so many deaths, absorbed the blood of countless fallen. Whispering tales of remembrance for every single one. Even the weather reflected the feeling of the place, as that the temperature dropped drastically when I entered the gates, and rain started falling heavily, and didn't stop until I had left them again, as though God himself was constantly trying to wash the land, his gift to humanity, clean of the atrocities taken place.

As I walked through the grounds, through the buildings and structures, I tried to not look at it as a history lesson, but as an experience. I used the pictures, stared at them until they were burned into my very soul, and then created around me conditions, as I imagined they must have been. I tried to erase everything about the present, all the displays and exhibits, and build in my mind the entire camp, as it was, full of hundreds of thousands of prisoners. As real as my recreations were, as intense and emotional, I don't think I could ever possibly understand even close to the terror one had to feel to be in there. What struck me most, more than the prisons, hanging poles, even the execution

trench, was the pathology lab, where experiments were carried out, in particular, the cellar, underneath, where corpses were held. It was deep stricken fear, filling every cell of my body, being in those cold tile rooms, where once unjustly dead were piled, until the entire room, in all its vastness, was completely full. With every step the fear multiplied, so that when I was no more than 5 steps from the door, I could go no further. Where the ground outside had been whispering stories it had seen, and the rebuilt walls of the buildings outside telling stories it had heard, these tiles were screaming tales of horror, and pain, enough to set a world of souls on fire. It was all I could do to convince my legs to take me out of there, as quickly as I could, out to the biting cold and rain, so I could join in the cleansing of the ground, and try and wash the sins I'd seen out of myself. Yet, while I wanted them desperately to be gone, to leave me be to my peace, I wanted even more for them to stay, to brand themselves into my eyes, my mind, my very soul, so that I would never, in my entire life, however long it lasts, forget the things I'd seen, heard, felt in there.

I was nearly oblivious to everything around me as I explored this place, but, I did take notice of some of the other people in the camp, visiting. Old men, perhaps old enough to remember the sights firsthand, walked solemnly and silently, like statues, through the buildings, and across the grounds. Even the smallest children understood the solace of the place they were in, and walked, hand in hand, with their parents, taking in what they're young minds were old enough to understand. It would be impossible for me to write down everything I saw inside those brick walls, or everything I felt being inside them. I can say, though, that it was one of the most worthwhile things I have ever done in my entire life, and I will never forget the images I saw there, and that I firmly believe that if everyone could see, for themselves, firsthand, the extent of the result of hatred, and bigotry, race crimes would almost vanish, and if these lessons were taught to our children, they may never again return.

*Nothings Fill my Heart*

I can see her, in my dreams.

She doesn't have a face, but she's beautiful.

Not just beautiful

Gorgeous

Breathtakingly

Heartachingly

I run my fingers down her

Soft, warm cheek

There is no set color, but she is alive

Vibrant.

Sometimes flushed.

I touch her lips.

Red, and sweet as the smell of fresh cut flowers

Wet from moist breaths coming out

Yet there is nothing there, really.

Space.

Her body is held to mine

Firm and youthful, yet soft

Like a velvet pillow

Ageless.

Heart beating through empty space

Every beat is love.

Every beat is meaning.

But there is no sound.

And her eyes

Oh, Lord, her eyes.

The universe is held in those eyes.

Galaxies swirl.

Stars explode.

Comets streaking past.

Millions of worlds covered with millions of people

All thinking millions of thoughts

Piercing, like a spotlight through thick fog

Burning, like the fires of hell itself

Yet caring.

Loving.

Embracing.

Rainbows painted in a colorless scale.

She lives there, in my dreams  
A figment in a world of nothingness  
Completely blank.  
Empty.  
A void of space.  
But she is there  
A wrinkle in the void  
Emptiness woven in such a pattern  
That the emptiness comes together  
Squeezes in  
Until it's solid emptiness.  
The shape of dreams.  
Worlds.  
Everything.  
Entire lives, every reason for being  
Every answer to every question  
Written in the stars with the ink of the soul.  
And shown through the eyes of the girl.  
The girl in my dreams.

*They Come*

Vision blurred  
Like the lines above the road  
On a hot summer day  
Or on the hood of a car  
After a cross-state trip  
Colors  
Flashes  
Sparkles of fairy magic  
If you think happy thoughts, you can fly  
Demons come into view  
Blurred in the shimmering air  
Bloodthirsty with grinning yellow teeth  
I know what they want  
It's what they always want  
Hope  
Love  
Passion  
They can smell it, you know  
From whatever dark hole they live in  
The scent of life draws them out  
Ravenous teeth  
Sucking the passion from my soul  
The hope from my heart  
Every drop of love I have  
Why?  
What could it mean for them?  
What do they get from it?  
From leaving you a dry  
Empty  
Husk?

The second you see someone special,  
And your heart beats  
They come  
The second you smile  
On a rainy day  
They come  
When life is stacked  
Against you  
But you sing anyway

They come  
It hurts them  
Like a burning  
Like a red-hot poker  
Every happy thought is an insult  
Every smile an unfriendly gesture  
Every kiss filled with love  
With an undying  
Never ending  
Passion  
Is a slap to the face  
And every time you make love  
When it's true love  
True passion  
Rooted in your soul and extending to every branch of your body  
Is like a barbed knife  
Plunged deep into the soft  
Withered  
Flesh  
Of the demons' body and soul  
When a child is born, it's a twist  
To the knife  
Wrenching  
Tearing  
A the world is given the product of love  
Pure and untouched  
Innocent  
A blank slate free of crime  
Free of sin  
Free of evil thoughts or intentions  
And every nurturing moment  
With love between the child and it's parents  
Suck the life from the demons  
Drains their beady eyes  
Lowers them closer to the blackness it comes from  
Shrinking back  
Ducking light  
Back into the shimmering air  
Folds around them  
Masking them  
Taking them back to where its cold

Where there is  
No love  
No hope  
No passion  
Until they heal  
And catch the scent  
And again  
They come







### **About the Author**

The author is not only someone you probably know, but you may have even known him when he actually wrote this stuff. He had hair then. A LOT of hair. But not so much on the face part of his head.

When the artist was writing the stuff from this book, he were a younger lad. His pants were almost always full of holes, and often adorned with long chains. He walked a mile to school, a mile to work, and many, many miles for fun. During the day, he went to class and took a lot of naps, for his school was not the most sophisticated of learning establishments. There was grass growing down through the skylights. A rather old man had to winch a lawnmower up on the roof a few times a year to mow it.

One patch in particular made a nice luncheon spot, if you felt like climbing up one of three different poles. The Author often felt like climbing poles. From the roof, there was quiet. Also, there was a better vantage point for The Author's friends to throw things at people. Apples were a favorite. When there were no people, there were birds, and when there were no birds, there was a satellite dish. Sufficient damage to the dish could interrupt the foreign language classes. That same old man once had to shovel an entire years worth of rotting apple out of the satellite dish. It was not a good day for him.

Ultimately, The Author feels that he should not be overly judged by the things that were in this book. The poetry was very old, and he was learning his chops. Sometimes he made poor word choices, and sometimes he artificially amplified his own emotions, because he thought powerful emotions made better poetry. Other times, he was just emotionally confused. He is still emotionally confused a good deal of the time, but has learned to keep his damned mouth shut about it.