

# **A Tension Span**

*The Greek Recipe*

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***Jonathan Grimm***

{ ----- }

*The Best of the collected works of*

**Psychedelicacy**

**Implied Consent**

**A Fathom Below**

**Burying Ghosts**

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## **A TENSION SPAN – THE GREEK RECIPE**

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***It wasn't you. It never happened. Where's my pants?***

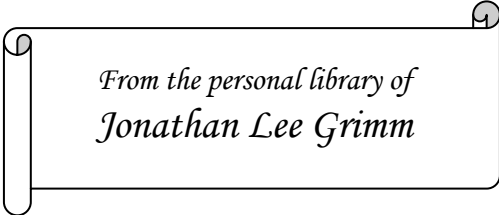
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to  
*Trudy*

*& Alexander*  
*& Jacob*

*my family, my future, my everything*



*From the personal library of*  
*Jonathan Lee Grimm*

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Cupid, that little love twerp,  
    ripped off my heart (It didn't hurt.)  
Sore with my loneliness causing pain,  
    I wanted it back again!

I saw him strike,  
    almost caught him on my bike.  
As I started to pout,  
    he dropped something out.

I picked it up slow,  
    it emitted a warm red glow.  
I looked for the name of its owner.  
    (I doubted it was a donor.)

When I found you,  
    all my dreams came true.  
Sitting there, you held my old heart.  
    Since then we've never been apart.

---

In a faceless nation  
    who would rule?  
*A faceless demon?*  
    *A faceless fool?*

## A Tension Span

Paper virgins lyin' there in the streets.  
Never experienced this thing called sex;  
Never been under those nice, silky sheets.  
What else could they ever come up with next?

Paper virgins wandering through the night.  
Life put together, but still all alone;  
Out looking for love, and willing to fight,  
For that simple act, to which we're all prone.

Paper virgins in an all-too-real life.  
Everyone else, this is what they say...  
"You should get married and be some man's wife."  
But they keep searching, until their last day.

Paper virgins, having vision that blurs,  
Hoping that they can find love that endures.

< 7-18-89 >

---

Again I see the end is near,  
My close is just around the corner.  
Should I go on with the show?  
*...or end it with a parting shot?*

*I think, therefore I am...*

but if I had not thought,  
would I be any less than I am now?  
Or would I just have been what I could be  
if I was what I am at that time  
of my first and final awareness of being?  
If I was before I am,  
I would have thought before I would think.  
Yes, *I think so, and therefore I am.*

---

Where did we meet,  
my dearest love?  
Under the setting sun,  
night unfolding.  
Where did we go,  
my dearest love?  
Off to the stars,  
night unfolding.  
Where did we stay,  
my dearest love?  
Under the moon,  
night unfolding.  
Where did we live,  
my dearest love?  
Among constellations,  
night unfolding.  
Where did we die,  
my dearest love?  
In each other's arms,  
night unfolding.

---

## A Tension Span

Sunlight pierces through the overhanging trees,  
displaying an eerie picture upon the rough terrain.

A low murmur of noise permeates the air.

The chittering and crawling of tiny bugs adds to the turmoil.

These noises are completely dwarfed by a waterfall in the distance.

Drawing nearer to it, the level rises to meet you.

*The roar... deafening.*

Water cascades down the waterfall in the type of fluid motion only it  
could achieve.

The waves look like they are frozen in time until they smack on impact  
with the turbulent waters below.

The deep blue of it all puts a glow on the morning sunrise.

A slight breeze blows through the air, carrying the song of wild birds  
singing welcome to a new morning.

After the fall is the pool.

Delving into the depths of peace,  
it flows downstream away from you into the morning sun,  
trickling on and on.

A single drop lands in the center of the pool.

Tiny, insignificant waves radiate out from the drop.

Barely perceptible at first, they dwindle into nothingness.

Ripples softly beat down upon the barren shore,  
lightly caressing the unending peacefulness of it all.

*And all is calm.*



Which way did the wind blow?

The leaves tumbled all around

in a randomness of diversity,

rustling on the ground before flying into the air.

The leaves' dull colors seem to suck the light

right out of the sky.

The silence in the air brings a tear to my eye.

No children playing in the streets,

no amusement parks humming music off in the distance,

not even a baby crying.

The silence adds to my solemnity as I walk down a lonely street,  
eyes downcast.

Which way did the wind blow?

It did not matter.

No one was here to care.

And I keep walking.

---

I stare down at the barrel of the gun,  
the edge of the cliff,  
the bottle of aspirins,  
the speedometer doing 140,  
the knife's serrated edge,  
the pavement 60 feet away...

...And I am pleased.

*We all spend our lives trying to  
immerse ourselves in the wholeness  
of what we believe to be  
**infinity.***

*It is a never-ending search for  
what is most likely an impossibility  
for man as he is today.*

**But,**

*we still strike out,  
determination the leading force  
behind our expedition into the  
**unknown.***

*The unknown can mean different things,  
objects, possessions, thoughts, ideas. A  
myriad diversity dependent upon a person's  
**viewpoint.***

*This one person's views are so enormous  
and all-encompassing, it is overwhelming  
to the untrained in its great  
**ways.***

*The search for knowledge is corruption.  
It is absolute. Men can base their lives  
on the pursuit, leading to loss and  
**ruin.***

*But what if he should succeed? Would not  
the knowledge of all that is or was be enough  
to greatly overbalance all that had been  
**endured?***

*Wouldn't the ground shake, and  
wouldn't the birds cry at that climatic  
moment? No one will ever truly  
**know.***

*If I was that person who was to  
find that great treasure of knowledge, I'd  
debate my past, my present, my  
**future.***

*And you would find me alone, deserted,  
sitting on the side of a mountain, watching  
the sunrise, contemplating my **departure from  
reality.***

**I hear the call of the Beast**

**And I am afraid**

Cutting through my sanity  
Ripping into my soul  
My evil thoughts come to feast  
My debt must be paid  
Turn into insanity  
Mortal pleasure its goal  
Make my life hell in the least  
To rest it has laid  
My one final vanity  
As Death now takes His toll

**Reject the call of the Beast**

**Do not be afraid**

Lest you lose your sanity  
Do not give up your soul  
Resist the call of the Beast  
At bay he's afraid  
To ravage your sanity  
To take away your soul  
Embrace the call of the Beast  
No longer afraid  
Accept my insanity  
Baring my precious soul  
*...I am lost.*

But for a single moment  
I can sense a flame  
Calling me back to my mind  
Raising me above  
The Beast's call makes not a dent  
Saying it's a game  
Nothing left for me to find  
All gone with a shove  
The flame stays true and unbent  
Glowing all the same  
Pulling me out of my bind  
Like flights of a dove

My soul returns from where sent  
Bearing not one blame  
For failure at being kind  
It blends without shove  
My anger is now all spent  
Gone as it once came  
Leaving myself whole behind  
My mind in care of  
Some say I made it repent  
Through courage or shame  
But it's you who showed me kind  
It's you who I love  
**...And I am found.**

“ For those who are lost  
on seas tempest toss’d.  
Or escaping the pain  
of some infernal reign.  
Or taking to the air  
after an ill-boding affair.  
Fleeing into the night  
from an uneven fight.  
To hide from the peace  
only offered the deceased...

*hide.*

Hide well, my friends  
around the earth’s ends.  
Come friends old and new.  
Join me, as I join you.  
Quick arrival your pace  
further our cause, our race.  
As Doomsday’s Clock unwinds,  
onward, Mankind.”

With these words, so it began,  
its twisty course generations span.  
The path causes pain, joy, and strife.  
But so it is, in this game called Life.

To look into infinity  
    across a thousand years of pain  
To peer into past histories  
    the triumphs against blood and tears  
    To step into *a better place*  
    free from all our earthly troubles  
To walk into the winter waves  
    lapping so cold against my legs  
To soar into the pitch black night  
    the darkness encompassing me  
    To fall into its cold embrace  
    as it takes my body back home  
To wake up in the light  
    warmth and tenderness my greeting  
To live with life  
    alive in my knowledge of living

A Tension Span

***I, who bear the burden of a million souls.***

Joys and expectation.  
Heartbreak and sorrow.

**Mine eyes see it all.**  
**Mine ears hear it all.**  
**My mind saves it all.**

*The multitudes lay bare their souls.*  
*Praying for mercy and understanding.*  
*Searching for a reason, a purpose.*

**I give them one.**

*Success?*

Not always.

*Failure?*

Sometimes.

*But what price can be paid for inaction?*  
*Do I dare let this world pass me by?*

I must take part in the twisty paths.  
Trod in the trails that lay before me and mine.

*Choose, and choose wisely.*

Divert the courses, manipulate and shape.  
Change reality to suit my mood.

Wreak havoc on the oppressed.  
Raise them from their oppression,  
*Only to find they like it so.*

**What price *ignorance*?**

**What price *understanding*?**

**What price *comprehension*?**



**Objectiveness** (Standing by the door, waiting)

SAK - Feb 15, 91

I view the world through the narrow-glass,  
    my objective so pure, yet so misguided.  
Observations without depth bring wrong conclusions,  
    the tribulations based on falsity.  
I despise the narrowness I am forced to draw upon.  
    How can my views be real if they are misinformed?  
The world goes by with just a few fleeting glimpses,  
    as I wait for the narrow-glass to contract;  
Spilling me into the darkness and loneliness it entails,  
    Brought on by other's views through the narrow-glass.

---

**Thinking** (Blissful Ignorance)

SAK - Feb 16, 91

What qualifies a thought as being profound?  
Is it determined by the effect it has  
    on the reader, writer,  
        or both?  
Does it have to get the point across?  
The point has to be made  
    before it can be received  
        or interpreted.  
Will the thought provoke other thoughts?  
The minds crank to life to  
    understand the purpose  
        or ignore.

---

**Mistakes I've Made**

(She's gone)

SAK - Feb 16, 91

Walking slowly through the night  
Out the door and on the streets.

(she's gone)

She left me so alone,  
I guess that's her right.

(she's gone)

I know we had our problems,  
And I should have seen them coming.

(she's gone)

On the rebound for love,  
Making decisions I know are wrong.

(she's gone)

I'm in deep, in a new life I don't love.  
And when my old flame walks by...

(she's gone)

I don't accept why my heart can still ache  
After the break.

**One more question**

(Decisions, decisions)

SAK - Feb 16, 91

**Staring off at nothing, yet everything—**

**Trying to understand it all**

**In as little time as possible.**

*They notice my hesitation.*

*They don't look pleased.*

*How can they expect an answer*

*When they don't understand it either?*

*Either they already know the answer,*

*Just asking to prove they were right.*

*Or they want to know what I think,*

*So they can decide what to think themselves.*

**An absolute answer is expected immediately.**

*I hate to disappoint them,*

*But I don't know the answer myself.*

*What is there to decide between us,*

*When I am unsure?*

*And they feel they have to ask?*

## A Tension Span

Burrowing deeply into the bowels of depression,  
I carve out my own little niche.

A place to hide,  
to be by myself, all alone.

Surrounded by their own problems,  
I'm completely lost among the masses.

My place is my refuge.

My place is my home.

**The darkness** is not kind.

Its mysteries remain unchallenged, unseen.

A trap waiting to be sprung,

**the darkness** is everything.

A **light** shines like a beacon.

A tiny pinprick of **light**,

But from here, a blazing nova unparalleled.

**the darkness** is seen.

**The light** has no substance, no form.

It is, as is everything.

It is purest essence.

**the darkness** is nothing.

Arisen from a bleak horizon,

**The light** ascends unhampered.

**The light** is here, **The light** is now,

**the darkness** is no more.

**The light** frees us from our bondage.

**The light** shows us the way.

**The light** leads us from our despair.

**The light** is **hope**.

**Hope** is **light**.

Lightning flashes before me.

Burning my eyes with its light, I am blinded.

I stumble to a stop,

chancing to rest my aching body against an old oak tree.

The moon in the night sky sends eerie shadows to the ground.

*The storm draws nearer.*

A rumble resounds from the west.

The air shakes from the low, raw volume.

The birds in the trees grow silent.

The air is calm and still.

*The storm is almost here.*

With the faint pitter-patter of thousands of drops,  
rain sprinkles down on the earth.

The ground cracks open in anticipation of the forthcoming rain.

*The storm is upon me.*

Rain falls from the heavens,  
beating down on the fields, the meadows,  
the lakes, and the streams.

My face grows wet and my clothes become heavy,  
sticking to my skin.

*The storm is over.*

The air takes on a greenish glow.

The air is vibrant, fresh, alive.

A rainbow in the east mightily spans the horizon.

Small animals come out to appreciate the view

and I go on my way, alone.

*The storm is gone.*

## A Tension Span

She had that gleam in her eyes, and I knew she was interested in more than companionship. I had never had the courage to ask this beautiful creature out on a date, but that all changed when that vicious rumor about me and the cheerleading squad flew through the halls. I guess that got her attention and aroused a little interest, if not craving. I never expected a second glance, but when she flashed that smile and terrific bod my way, I had to go for it. English class will never be the same since we kissed during the love scene of Romeo and Juliet. There were catcalls from the girls and looks of hatred and jealousy from the guys. She was sacred in their eyes. They didn't know that I felt the same, and that I loved her.

The movie was not even halfway over when she stood up and motioned for me to follow. I left our Sprite and popcorn on the floor. *So I'm cruel.* She took my hand and led me out of the theater and into the parking lot. She turned around and hugged me. My hands instinctively dropped to that exquisite ass and I gave a reassuring squeeze. She exhaled a sigh that took misty form in the winter air. She closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and then started to unbutton her blouse. I, of course, about creamed in my shorts. Each button took an excruciating eternity, until her well-endowed chest was laid bare.

Nipples hard in anticipation and in response to the cold, she had something more than necking in mind. I reached out with both hands and gingerly laid my hands upon the most sought after breasts in Bloomfield High's history since Tricia graduated. She shivered in the cold and it only made me want her more. I asked her if she always went to the movies not wearing a bra. She said she made an exception this time.

I wrapped my coat around her trembling shoulders and escorted her to my car. She got in the driver's side and whipped my coat over to the passenger side. She reached out and grabbed me by my belt, then pulled me into the car. In no time flat my belt joined my coat, followed by her shirt, my shirt, her nylons, and my jeans. She yanked my underwear down and off with her right hand, as her left caressed my chest. I grabbed her panties by the crotch and slowly pulled them off. The windows of the car were fogged up, and she was hot.

She rolled over and threw her right leg over me, straddling me. I tugged at her skirt, then decided to have some fun with her first. I leaned forward and took her left nipple into my mouth. She started moaning as my tongue began to slowly circle its tip. I fondled her gently as her hands clenched at my thighs. I pulled her forward and lifted her skirt just enough to get properly underneath. I kissed her passionately as I slowly lifted her off my lap. Her head rolled back and she licked her lips. I lowered her back down, slipping deep inside. Her legs pushed against my sides as I began the movement.

Her breathing was rhythmic and getting increasingly heavier. I quickened the pace and shoved deeper inside. Her nails dug deep into my back in response. The moaning continued as the motion continued. She trembled in confused ecstasy. Her whole body shook as she had orgasm after orgasm. She crushed her lips against mine and dug in her knees for more. I pushed and I shoved until sweat was beading on her forehead. In her frenzy, she didn't notice or care. I reached up and wiped it away without interrupting the pace. She clutched at me as I let loose, sending my love streaming into her. She collapsed in exhaustion and I held her in my soothing embrace.

We kissed and cuddled until long after our curfews.

We didn't care about that, only about each other.

I whispered, "I love you" into her ear.

She looked up at me and said, "I love you too."

So I fucked her again, on principle.

She was sixteen

*and the love of my life.*

I guess that's why it hurts so much.

We were happy

*enjoying the best of times.*

Away faded the night.

The dream went on

*reality so unreal.*

Maybe that's why I didn't see it comin'.

**Don't Look Away**

**Czar**

Jun 22 1990

Life was the best.

*Life was goin' great.*

We had it all or so I thought.

We wanted to get away

*no one else could understand*

the way we felt.

And then our parents,

*we told them all our thoughts.*

They didn't know what to say, *they'd look away...*

The road went on,

*the lights were low,*

and the stars above.

Our love was deep,

*our passion true,*

And I loved you...

Then I saw the tears

*falling down your face,*

My heart stopped, then broke...



What was wrong?

*What did I do or say?*

To make you feel this way?

You said I was nice,

*but that you didn't want anyone to get hurt.*

That it was better we went our separate ways.

That night was blurred,

*I thought our love was true.*

But that all ended, ***when she looked away...***

Don't look away...*look away*

Don't look away

**Don't!**

Don't look away

***Because I love you...***

Don't look away.

I miss you.

A Tension Span

{ A song in three parts + }  
{ chorus repeated once, }  
{ with additional ending }  
{ the second time. }

**Looking Back**

**SAK**

Mar. 14, 1991

10:06 A.M.

The wind blowing through the trees  
It kind of takes me back  
To when I was a kid  
And life was so carefree  
And happy.

Now I'm sittin' all alone  
Thinking 'bout my past years  
Overcoming all the fears  
And rememberin' things  
And laughing.

**Oh how I wish I could go back there.  
To the place where things looked so rosy.  
Hard to think how long it's been,  
Wish I could do it all again.**

Running in the night, breathless  
Just for the hell of it  
Listenin' to the sounds  
Of things far away  
And those close by  
And wondering...

**Oh how I wish I could go back there.  
To the place where things looked so rosy.  
Hard to think how long it's been,  
Wish I could do it all again.**

But I know it's not for me  
As long as we are free  
It'll be just me...  
And that's all I need.

Shot Down In Flames

(mono)

My life flashes before my eyes.

Pain and sorrow.

Joys and happiness.

All gone, all gone...

(diving plane)

Prepared to take-off  
into that blue yonder.

I should have waited,  
my end to ponder.

Into the sky,  
as fast as I could go.

No time to take it slow,  
let's go! LET'S GO!

(refrain)

***Shot down in flames.***

Lightning flashes in the night.

***Shot down in flames.***

I go down, it's my right.

***Shot down in flames.***

I leave it all behind tonight.

***Shot down in flames.***

I say my final good-night...

(guitar solo)

Up there in the air,  
as free as a bird.  
It was the greatest feelin',  
haven't you heard?  
I flew away  
into that starry night.  
Into that fatal fight.  
We fight, it's our right!

(refrain)

(guitar solo 2)

I lay here broken—  
my life seeps away.  
I'll get my revenge,  
there will be hell to pay.  
My soul flies free,  
Oh baby, cry for me.  
I might come back again,  
to be ***shot down in flames.***

(refrain)

(fade out)

**Feel So Right, Be So Wrong**  
**(I'll Still Be Loving You)**

Remember that night forever.

We were walkin' tall, walkin' proud.

Then you were a walkin' funny.

And I guess we were a little too loud.

Your mama, somehow she found out,

What happened 'tween me and you.

A tear came to her eyes...

(pause)

***But there was nothing she could do.***

(refrain)

I knew things couldn't be the same,

And I thought we did what was right.

But now they think it's a cryin' shame,

What happened on that moon-lit night.

How can anything feel so right?

But at the same time be so wrong?

Well, I can't wait that long, baby,

I guess I'm just not that strong.

My heart-ache shines like a beacon,

Cutting through my world full of pain.

Pictures of which I had grown fond,

Remind me of what could have been.

Without you life has no meaning,  
And I don't know what I should do.  
But until life from me is fleeing,  
I know I'll still be lovin' you.

(solos)

They tried to push me with a shove.  
They tried to get me to go free.  
We didn't have sex, we made love  
***And that's all that matters to me.***

(spoken)

Maybe they were right,  
And maybe we were wrong.  
But I'll never believe that.  
Just listen to this song...

(refrain)

But now we've gone our separate ways,  
After all the hell we've been through.  
I'll still be loving you.  
I'll still be loving you, girl.  
I'll still be loving you.  
I'll still be loving you, girl.  
forever, forever, ***FOREVER!***

(shout echoes).

(spoken)

But even after all these years,  
I'll still be loving you.

## A Tension Span

Ignorance is *never* bliss.

This beautiful maid, seductive as only a pure female could be, captured my heart as she batted her long eyelashes. For weeks I had watched from afar. Hidden behind a neighbor's hut, tucked away in a merchant's offerings, even burrowed under a pile of loose hay in the stables, I had gazed upon her.

And loved her.

I snuck towards her hut in the all-encompassing night. I crept to her room to find her awaiting me. She stared deep into my eyes, my soul, and she kissed me passionately. My desire grew from a flickering spark to a towering inferno and I kissed her back. She bent down and we took to her cot. The candle was blown out and the night breeze blowing through the village did not betray us.

After that night, she glowed even more than she had in the past. Her eyes sparkled radiantly when she saw me. Soon our visits grew more frequent until it was almost every night. It was on this last night that there was a chill in the air and the wind was much colder than before, almost as cold as the heart of my beloved's father, who watched the scene unfold before him, his eyes ablaze, axe in hand...



Tranquility is so unreal. Chaos runs rampant all around.

I guess that makes me the center.

*Or does it?*

What could possibly place me at the center  
of this furious attention?

But how could I be on the edge,  
letting myself be just a part of some greater thing?

Or in between, having a major or minor role?

I must move closer to the center.

But if I'm already at the center,

*would that mean that I was running away?*

---

When you look at a window, do you see what is on the other side? When I look at a window, I see what is on the other side, but I also see a reflection of myself and those things behind me. When I look at the window only to see myself, my reflection becomes sharper and my background clearer. The objects and scenes on the other side of the glass are as my reflection was before. But I wonder why? Do other people do this? If I can treat a window like I do a mirror, why can't I use a mirror as a window? Then again, who says I haven't?

---

When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall.

Or at least that is what they tell me.

But in my little world, the cradle just hovers

*...and the ground rushes up and smucks it.*

---

Sunday

4-8-90 11:34:29 P.M.

***“Reaper’s New Lexicon” Part I***

**Truth-** What someone believes is.

**Lie-** Anything not true.

**Belief-** What someone thinks.

**Thought-** What we think.

**Trust-** Belief that something will be.

**Discrimination-** Thoughts that you are better than others.

**Honesty-** The truth with thought and trust.

**Anger-** Emotion of being wrong.

**Love-** Purest emotion of sharing.

**Ecstasy-** Experiencing love.

**Music-** Expression in sounds.

**Light-** Absence of darkness.

**Darkness-** That which cannot be seen.

**Life-** Death postponed.

**Suicide-** Release from life and love.

**Death-** The end of life.

**Holocaust-** Large scale death.

**Salvation-** Escape from holocaust.

**Crazy-** Being sane and knowing it.

**Sane-** Illusion of cohesive thought.

**Chaos-** Unending diversity.

**Intelligence-** Acquired knowledge recognizable by others.

**Knowledge-** Truth as someone believes it.

**Language-** Communication of thoughts and ideas.

**Ideas-** Sparks of creativity.

**Creativity-** A new idea from an unknown source.

**Art-** Appreciation of skill by others.

**Money-** Downfall of civilization.

**Civilization-** Thought that we know ourselves.

**Name-** Knowing this puts you in control of infinity.

Thursday

4-12-90 11:57:34 P.M.

***“Subconscious”***

Why is there a thing called your sub consciousness? It makes you do things that are morally and ethically right, but deprives a person of his or her spontaneity. Even if your morals change, the subconscious mind picks up on your every thought, analyzes it, then adds a little comment of its own. It is not a detailed message listing all the points it disagrees with, it just gives an overall “This is good” or “I really shouldn’t be doing this” feeling to you. The strength of this message, how you react to it, and the situation it is responding to determines your character and basic convictions. In some people, the subconscious messages are powerful and lead them to do the “right” thing. For others, it is just strong enough to cause him or her to get a bad feeling about something. Others might completely ignore, or even worse, completely disobey their feelings and go ahead with what they were doing. The subconscious thoughts are the mind’s true thoughts about something broadcast on almost a primal emotional level. It is unhampered by thoughts of high anxiety, depression, or hormonal imbalances. It is this resistance to all other factors that makes it such a valuable judge of character. The subconscious mind relays to a person true feelings, when that person is unsure of what to do.

Saturday

4-14-90 11:54:39 P.M.

***“Diversity, Surprise, Change”***

The wonders and joys of diversity are literally unending. This mutation, this change is what makes our lives so interesting. It puts an end to constant normalcy and boredom. The same old grind isn't the same anymore. The world is teeming with life and is just waiting to pop out and surprise you. The surprise is everything. How ironic in a society based on structure. Strict rules and regulations pale before the onslaught of something as simple as a surprise. The joke is not only on someone, but everyone. The irony of irony is ironic itself. If you ponder that you may be surprised yourself. Even from the very beginning there has been change. Nothing can escape it because it affects those who try to escape it the most. From an early age you encourage and agree with diversity, surprise, and change. It might have started with a jack-in-the-box, continued on to friends and movies, finally migrating into your personal relationships and daily life. Fun was had along the way, but it just doesn't seem to happen as much after you begin to mature.

This is a sign that you've grown up mentally as well as physically.

Change is good. Change is right. Change is unavoidable.

But why did change change me?

**I saw my childhood slip away.**

Right before my eyes,  
years tumbled and flowed.

I tried to reach out and grab ahold,  
but the memories ran through my hands  
*like water.*

*And I became a man...*

**I guess I grew up on my own.**

No one wanted to help,  
or show me the way.  
So I went the way I wanted,  
but I never knew there'd be  
*so much pain.*

**Into the night, I ran.**

Away from those who cared,  
my lifelong friends.  
They never knew what it was like,  
to be all by themselves, lost,  
*so alone.*

**She held me tight in her embrace.**

She said she loved me,  
and that she always would.  
Then we went our separate ways.  
Our love didn't bring happiness,  
*just more pain.*

**They said I didn't know love.**

Well, baby, how am I doing?  
The night is ours.  
Your momma don't know and  
your daddy don't care about  
*me and you.*

*And she stayed at my side...*

## Questions

**why is the sky blue?**

why do people hate each other?

why do people kill?

why does the unseen wind move?

why are things beautiful?

why do we use our bodies, not our minds?

why do we know what we need?

why is there philosophy?

what in the *hell* is philosophy?

why is there religion?

why are there retarded people?

why do people like the light?

why are pictures art?

why are people different?

why is there music?

why do you keep r

*What do you do when the dream dies?*

---

The road keeps on going and here I sit.

Just watchin' the people go by.

“Good day to you, madam. May good fortune follow you.”

“Hello good sir, how do you do? Fine, you say?

May it only get better.”

Why we go through the motions I'll never know.

Who cares about what you do?

*Who cares about the weather?*

---

A spring morning is a terrible thing to waste. They number so few in your lifetime, yet you squander them away on pursuits that won't help you later on. Getting up in the morning takes on a whole new meaning when you have everything to live for...  
or nothing.

## A Tension Span

It was the same old story, it just had a different ending. You always suppose that our boys are coming home, but when they don't it hurts the most. The pain of not knowing is not nearly as bad as having just opened the door to find an officer in uniform- arms crossed, eyes neutral, ready to console a family in need...

The Huey never made it. James grabbed the receiver on Gunnar's back and screamed for support. Billy knew it was helpless and yanked him back. James was desperate and afraid of death, and tried to fight him. Eric and Scott held James as Billy read their coordinates into the receiver. He ended by saying "Arclight". James screamed, "Noo!" and fell limp to the ground. Steve laid cover fire and they headed deeper into the jungle as the first bomber planes were heard in the distance.

*Operation: Arclight* went into effect as ton after ton of napalm fried the jungle foliage to the ground. All that remained were ashes and six skeletons huddled around a seventh.

They all knew it was coming.

There the family waits, hoping to hear the news of how their son is doing. They try to ignore the feeling of dread that fills the house. Six-year-old Katie comes walking down the stairs and asks, "Where's James?"

And there is a knock on the door no one wants to hear.



It was two o'clock in the morning and the lights of Jake's stereo peered out through the darkness. The bright red dot, TAPE. The bright green arrow, PLAY. The dull Orange Rectangle of Dolby Noise Reduction. The tape kept on playing over and over, but no words were spoken and no songs were played. Jake still heard the message.

Jake awoke at 6:03 a.m. for the fourth time that night. He was drenched in sweat. He sat bolt upright and almost passed out from lack of oxygen. He stumbled down the stairs to find himself in a room he had never been in before. A thousand times he had walked through this room, but not once had he really looked at it. He studied the pictures on the walls, the pale green shag carpet, the fake plastic palm tree in the corner, the marble bust of Bach. How utterly unlike him it all seemed.

Jake wandered out the front door and looked towards the sunrise. The sun rose as it always had, sunlight streaming to bring in a new day. Jake couldn't take it. He slumped to the steps and buried his head in his hands. There was a tap on his shoulder and Jake's wife of eight years asked him what was wrong. Jake stared into her eyes, the eyes of a stranger. He didn't know what was wrong with him. The dull ache of the back of his head hid last night's aftermath of a surprised burglar. The gift of a crowbar... and amnesia.

## A Tension Span

“They sat huddled around a campfire in the middle of Black Rock National Forest, over eighty miles from the nearest human being. It was eighteen degrees and dropping fast as the snow storm approached. Captain Elder watched the group with pity. There was no way they could survive the night if they weren’t rescued. He gritted his teeth and joined the tight circle of bodies. The words “death warmed over” came to mind, but Elder pushed that thought away.

“The plane crash had been bad. The left engine had gone out in the middle of extreme turbulence. Gale force winds buffeted the small jetliner and threw it forcefully to the ground. Trees ripped the wings off, but it just hadn’t slowed the plane down enough. It flipped into the freezing waters of Lake Brimwood. Only the strong, the young, and the lucky made it to shore. Of 128 passengers, only eleven remained to see the plane sink from sight.

“Captain Elder watched the first innocent snowflake float down from the sky. He stared into the eyes of ten people, ten lives, ten dreams— all about to die. And he cried.

“The storm struck.

“At ten o’clock the next morning, the first rescue crew came upon the bodies. They were huddled around the remains of a fire, long since burned out. Ted Greely came upon Captain Elder, frozen solid saluting the sunrise. He wore no coat, for it was in a bundle in his lap. Ted returned the salute and took the coat, to find a baby girl still alive inside. Maybe there was still hope. She was flown to the nearest hospital and was later transferred to the Rochester Medical Center.

She survived.

## Addendum : The Pursuit of the Perfect HOE

“She owed a lot to Captain Elder. His sacrifice saved her from certain death. She took the name Jenny Elder and worked hard to live up to the name. She graduated college Summa Cum Laude. She grew to be a beautiful woman and had many children. Little Edward grew up to be a governor of California for three terms. Jeffrey was the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the military through the Middle East Conflicts of ‘51. Tony grew up to be a Senator for eighteen years. Charles headed the first manned mission to Mars for NASA in 2044. Joel, the youngest, was President for two terms.

“Jenny owed a lot, but the world owed a lot more.

“Here’s to you, Captain Gregory James Elder, my self-sacrificing father... Jenny, my wife of fifty-three years... and my sons Edward, Jeff, Anthony, Charles, and Joel. Thank you.”

- Capt. Steve Elder

(Upon his retirement from the space program in 2063.)

## A Tension Span

Now I wonder how long it takes for this shit to kick in. I hope it doesn't take too long because I am bored to death as it is. A few more minutes would be bearable, but hour after hour of pedantic drudgery would be beyond even my range for keeping my composure.

**Now where was I?** Oh, yes, my boredom. Once again, my *second disciple* has gone astray. Where did I go wrong in my teachings? Have I been a bad master? I know that the problem lies somewhere between the teaching and the interpretation. Why, *oh why*, does he not have the trained patience and virtue of my most treasured *third disciple*? Even though the *third* has less training, he has traveled far and has grown great in possibility. Where have I gone wrong in my *second*? Only time will tell.

**Now who was I?** That's better. Nothing like a shocking opener to an already shoddy Letter to the Editor, especially when that editor is reading it at the same time it is being written. I wonder if it is being critiqued as it is written? Or before the thought has even been formulated in my mind? Every thought, every action, every typo carefully examined to judge the character and meaning expressed within? I hope not. Maybe I should try the sports page. Better yet, the funnies...

**Now what was I?** Living life in the uncivilized lands has greatly manipulated my views and ideas of the world. Nothing magnifies the views like a limitation of the scope. When compared to the rest of the multitudes, I somehow achieve a level of notoriety, even though I am unbeknownst of its origin. What caused this great burst of fame? Four hours of sweat and toil? Gosh no, just four hours of filling in dots.

**Now why was I?** I figure there is some great purpose in life out there just waiting to gobble me up or hold me in its evil clutches. I agree with the pessimist in always being prepared for the worst, so as to be only pleasantly surprised. Maybe this has caused me to be a bitter and depressed person. Maybe I don't realize the extent of the deviation from the norm and disassociation from society I have achieved. For every cause there is an effect, but is the inversion true? Is there a cause for every effect?

**Now when was I?** From the dawn of time man has asked that question. The positioning of a man in relation to the rest of society has always fascinated him. Is he just a logical progression in the natural order of things, or the prime progenitor of some great thing to come? There is an overwhelming drive to be the first- the best at what is to be. But how can anyone be the best? Man is constantly changing; therefore "best" is relative only to now. And why should someone want to be better than someone else? What have they to gain? Nothing. And I speak from experience.

**Now how was I?** What makes one great? I know that I am destined to be a *Great One*, yet I have yet to fathom why. This one little detail was left out of the scheme of things I was informed of. I see greatness in everyone. Shocking as though it seems, a blinding flash of purity shines from those I know I must be aware of, for they are *good*. Those that are evil bear me no malice because I bear them none. Animosity has gained me few friends, but few enemies as well. The balance may seem too close to be accurate or decisive, but I still come out ahead now, and will continue to in the future.

## A Tension Span

The room begins to swim before me. The effects finally grab at me from its depths. Yet why is it depths? With this observation, mighty hands grab from the sides and above, dragging me left to my death. "But I cannot die." Saying that ends this useless charade of mortality. Twisted truth overcomes a rusty nail like lies every time. Let's see...  
Is the room still swimming? What are those...

Fish swim through my mind and in the air before me. Green hues and blue news. **Spreading futility with aquatic grace, I am waved into submission.** Eyes closed, I see it all. Water percolates in my ears like coffee in a Bunn-O-Matic. My life spreads before me, but how can that be? The only thing that ever spread before me was **CENSORED**.

Everywhere I go I see you there. **What?** Are you following me in the future tense? My **third disciple** would know the answer to that. My **first** could only look and stare, knowing full well the extent of my wrath. Speaking of my **first**, why, **oh why**, hath thou forsaken me? I always wanted to say that. The sky is falling. But then again, it's always falling over the edge, kind of like a certain **disciple** of mine...

Somebody save me. **Now that was stupid.** Am I not saved already? Of course, now pass the sea horses and don your masks, here comes a facet of my faucet. Drowning in air, where did I swim? Away and afar, close to those I must face. **Mask of fire and mask of night**, make my decision true and right. I open the door and the tiger attacks. Clawing my face and arm, biting at my legs. The lady goes free, only to die a horrible death in her mid eighties when she is gang raped by the Fingerbanger Gang of South 'O' Street.

## Addendum : The Pursuit of the Perfect HOE

Wow. *Ecstasy is a mindless frenzy.* Kind of like a blonde in heat. Not to be confused with a fly in molasses or a squeegee lost in a sea of cheese. My glasses see that which I can only hear. A fist comes flying, then lands and walks away. My shoes are untied and I don't care. My Cheerios are no longer cheery and are as flat as a Jr high cheerleader. Pancakes and sausage, Ozzie and Harriet, Smith & Wesson, fire and ice, mountain oysters and beer, a sensitive nose and a juicy Bronx cheer.

News on the radio echoes through my head. A gun opens fire and people are dead. Zombies rise up and take over the world. The Greenhouse Effect overheats them and the dead die. The planet explodes and dies, like flies that I swat with my bright orange fly swatter. The earth tilts and sways, then careens off and rubs noses with the moon. *Life on Mars, death on Earth, a peasant's life of Royal birth.*

An air ball and a pocket of grease. Sunshine shines on the clouds. A rainbow arcs forth in search of a pot of gold. Alchemists rush to turn lead to gold. Pb on the brain. Pb mat is peanut butter. Jelly and jam. Shake your head. Bake and ram with cousin Sam. A life with no breaks, the cradle will fall. *Wave to the crowd Johnny, you're about to fall.*

A cat slurping milk on the verdant Cherry Lane. Cars parked in defiance of the atmosphere. Two in one car, three in another. Clothes on the floor, four on the floor, give it some gas and *let's drive. Clothes your eyes.* Crash and burn. Seventeen and hanging your head in disgrace. *That was yesterday, today is a new tomorrow.* My Richard is on the rampage. Look out, I'm not coming for you. Disappointed you might be, but thankful that you escaped me once again.

Attention is paid and yet another whore gets laid. A world and a life, passing me by. Here I am on the shoulder, changing a flat tire. The moon shines down on my baseball cap and I drink deep the pool of radiance. *Stars in the sky and tears in my beer. Take a swig, spit or swallow. In sin you'll forever wallow.*

## A Tension Span

Dig a hole, patch an eye, swing your bat and watch the ball fly. Catcher is out on third, scratchin' and swearing at his home supper plate. Cascading water drowns his voice and derails his train of thought. Strike two, and *may I please walk?* Take a number, take a tote, take your turn, take a dive, take a share. By the seashore.

Whoa, horsie! Buck you must. Bridle your courage and quench thine thirst. Eat a hamburger and spite the cow. The fatted calf pleads with his eyes, but his bellar is cut short by an ate. Acts of mercy, acts of war, acts of compassion, *please don't act anymore.* I want to know what is real, so why am I slipping on a banana peel? I hit a comma and dropped into a coma. A plane crashed because I no longer piloted. A tick has it's tock, while hickory had his dickory and his dock. *Ding dong, who is it?* The wicked witch is dead.

**Double double, toil and trouble. Twins twice, work and struggle.** Suck my lollypop and pass the beets. Bang the drum slowly and you'll feel the echo in your feet. Purple men stole your mind, now I control you. My *third disciple*, here is your charge. Treat it well, as I have shown you to. Don't play with that, it's not paid for. Take that soul and banish it to hell. I'll pick it up on my way through.

Light grows to dark. Another day becomes another night. Knights fight for a lovely dame's hand, even though they both have something else in mind. **A demon with no face, a winner that lost the race.** I struggle and toil, but in the end, my veggies still boil. Bring it on, I need the workout. A little strain, a little stress. Maybe some popcorn will make me want to watch this movie. A drive-in called *life*. A phone call remains in her hands, but my ears do not hear. Touch that and I won't be responsible for what happens. **Now look what you've done.**

A purple paperclip on a yellow notebook. Seemingly fitting, but not entirely so. Sew it up, put it on, wear and wear alike. Shades of grey, hues of shades. Sunglasses worn in the Everglades. Pass the butter. The heat is unbearable, my hand is on fire. Put water on this baby, I'm burning up inside. Fire and love. Sizzle and spark. Arf and bark.



## Addendum : The Pursuit of the Perfect HOE

Take a walk on the sidewalk to the top. *Headed in the right direction, assured of uncertainty, lexicon in hand, thinking of wine, women and song.* Worshipped by the heathens, prayed on by those preyed upon. Murder and pillage. Love a little village. **Spread Joy and her twin sister happiness, everyone else has.** Join the club. Club the foot. Foot the bill. Bill and Ted, having a most excellent time on a bogus trip. Tame mares and fuddy duddies with long goatees and white hair. Preach and rant and rave, then bow down and kiss my donkey.

*As you wish, so must I grant.* My zipper is stuck. Oh, well. Pen gone dry as a creek bed, just as surely as a person in a coffin (under a gravestone someone tipped over in a nameless cemetery just west of here) is dead. Count your blessings, two at a time. Slam on the brakes and stop on a dime. Check out a book and chance a kiss from a babe. One slap, then two, my final act is made. A tryst with no play is fair game. Searching for love in a dingbat dame. **Where is my hat?** What day is yesterday? Knock on wood. Play the part and hoist the anchor. Here we go. **Set sail!**

**Swim to the surface. Dry off. A towel has been provided. Use the mirror and comb your hair. Get dressed, and be prepared. Inspection time. I guess you'll do.** Moss on your tape. Kick my bucket, buy my farm, take my flying leap. And burn, bitch, burn.

Look around and play the flute. Paint on the barn peels in the air, red flecks of dandruff, sprinkle, sprankle. Winds blow and I like it so. **Spread the Wealth, she's a friend of Joy and happiness, whom you've had before.** Lightning and thunder, ravage and plunder. Loot and clarinet, spray the slide of your trombone. Ask questions and avoid my answers.

***Disciples gather and be awed..***

## A Tension Span

"For those who hear what I speak, **beware!** A great evil has been loosed and even now bears down upon us. Running and hiding will not let us prevail. **To arms!** Gather round me, lock your eyes in preparation. Guard well, *as I kill you from behind.* **Fools!** The evil was in your midst. **It was I and I was it!** Suck this one, buddy!"

A knife plunged deep and *first* bought the farm. An axe swung in defiance, but one duck and agonizing scream later, my *second* had taken out my *third.* *Oh woe!* What promise he had had. *Second* will pay, and pay dearly. As only I had the power to do, I crushed him, like the little bug he is.

Flet that muscle and feel the surge, let loose and now you have to worry. Grab and take, she said *no*, but I couldn't wait. Wrong is right. One left turn too many and I'm lost on a dead end street. *Why, oh why, did my scarecrow play hooky, leaving my school food to be eaten by the squirrels?* Fare thee well, and mind your P's and Q's. **Say please and thank you then stab that bastard in the back.**

Show your face, you coward fool. Show what is behind that mask. I dare you. You can't walk away from me! **COME BACK HERE!** I command you! Come back! **COME BACK!** Please? No.

No!No!No!No!**NO!**No!**NO!**no!No!**NO!**no!No!**NO!**no!No!**NO!**no!No!**NO!**no!No!**NO!**no!No!

Please come back. *I'll be nice.* Won't I? Please, please, please come back. I need to see you one last time *so I can rip out your eyes you bastard!*

## Addendum : The Pursuit of the Perfect HOE

Stork circling the house, dropping the baby, letting it smuck in the begonias. **Life's a ditch dug by a lazy atemic peanut.** Light the candle and dance naked around the fiery ashes. Burn in cleansing fire, and let Brahman be pleased. Bite my M&M, chew my beef jerky, and most of all, play with my sincerity. Go down on my desire. Reaching out for the hand to assure me, grabbing instead air. Plummeting down into the depths. Ego trip. **Watch and learn, or ignore me and be ignorant.** Slap you silly, it would be an improvement. Fire truck, sirens go screaming after the ambulance. **Chase it, chase it.** Bite the worm. **Yeah!**

Wake up, roll over, you're in a new day.

**Bullshit, it's still just the same day. I fooled you.**

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha.

You poor bastard.

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha.

You poor bastard.

12:58:20 A.M.

November 2, 1991

## A Tension Span

I stared into her eyes and could only see myself reflected.

### *Was I disappointed?*

Worse things have happened, and more was accomplished than I had originally dreamed of, but with my first success all I wanted was more. So I raised my expectations just a little too high and jacked my hopes and dreams back out of sight; I was just begging to be knocked down a few pegs. A minor setback shouldn't bother me too much, should it? It's not like she would actually go through with it. I know that I mean enough to her that she wouldn't. ***Would she?***

“I looked into the mirror,  
and the mirror was me.  
But I couldn't see the times  
when we were happy and free.  
I really could love you  
and say I always will, but  
Fuck you, bitch!  
You ain't worth the thrill.”

I pointed the gun at the side of my head  
and the man in the mirror pulled the trigger.

“She carries a lock of hair  
in her pocket.

She wears a cross  
around her neck.

The hair is from a little boy,  
And the cross is someone  
she has not met...

*not yet”*

- **Black Crowes**

She was beautiful.

She sat propped up on the hood of the blue ‘stang like she was a cover girl for the company. The sun played with her hair and cast a perfect shadow with a crisp outline on the pavement. She threw her head back and laughed when a two-year-old playing with a ball threw it at my right leg, almost tripping me. Her eyes were like fire, but she quickly regained her composure and held out her hand.

“The name’s Lisa.”

I smiled and shook her hand. “Steve, Steve Kirkland.” I was up for company and said, “Nice kid, yours?”

“Yeah, I was young, but he was worth it.” As I bent down to pick up her kid my necklace slid out from behind my unbuttoned shirt. Lisa gasped at the sight of my cross. She jumped at me and grabbed it. “Where did you get this!” she demanded. I put her son down and stared into her eyes.

Then I kissed her.

## A Tension Span

“Times... change.  
People, places, and faces—  
they all fade with time.  
But separate ways  
and over 365 days  
will never change the feelings.  
That I had for you.  
That I have for you.  
I looked into your eyes,  
And you know what I saw.”

Someone once said:  
“There’s only one girl that I will ever love  
And that was so many years ago.  
Though I’ll never get her out of my heart.”

“And a girl became  
a woman  
and a boy became  
a man.”

“A loss of innocence sucks big time.”  
Don’t we know it.

O.K., I’m sorry. (Quote me, dammit!) (just kidding)

“So maybe I didn’t have the right,  
but nothing can ever change  
what happened that night.”

“And the pouring rain  
could never match  
the tears in my heart.”

“I was greatly surprised  
that I had a glimpse  
of paradise,  
but I fucked up  
(as usual),  
so

Good-bye &  
God bless.”

“Why couldn’t my words  
echo the feelings in  
my heart?”

### *Why?*

“You will always remember the first time.

Not because of the act.

Not because of the reasons.

Not because of the whispered words.

But because of the way you felt.

Your mind guards your body.

Emotions protect your soul.

When your mind is lost in confusion,  
and your emotions govern your body...

It will happen.

Your mind rebels because it thinks it should,  
but still wonders why it felt so good.

If it wasn’t meant to be,

then why did it fit?

(I wanna know)”

## A Tension Span

“Memories are funny.  
The bad times start to gray  
and boring times fade away.  
The good times endure.  
The good times last.  
Even through all the hell,  
you remember the fun.  
You remember the laughs.  
You remember the sharing.  
I remember you.”

“I looked into the mirror  
and the mirror was me.  
But I couldn’t see the times  
when we were happy and free.”

*But now I can.*

“Strike three and you’re out.”

“It wasn’t the thought of  
“getting away with it”,  
necessarily, it was being  
able to open up and  
say and show who  
I was. I could never  
do that before  
because no one ever  
trusted or believed  
in me.  
Until you did.”



“Now I’ve found a new love,  
and I’ve heard you’ve had others.  
But do you know the difference  
between who you love,  
and those who are lovers?  
An act and a feeling  
only get you so far.”

$\alpha$	“Four years ago	$\alpha$
$\alpha$	I was a stranger.	$\alpha$
$\beta$	Three years ago,	$\beta$
$\beta$	a friend.	$\beta$
$\Gamma$	Two years ago	$\Gamma$
$\Gamma$	almost your lover.	$\Gamma$
$\Delta$	One year ago	$\Delta$
$\Delta$	I was bitter.	$\Delta$
$\Omega$	This year...	$\Omega$
$\Omega$	a stranger, once again.”	$\Omega$

The Raige

*“Better run for cover,  
‘cause it looks like rain again.”*

- Tesla

***The Raige*** burns in chained emotions.

A beast in its own right,

but the only volunteer to  
meet the challenge initiated  
by the scream of defiance  
towards a much fouler  
Beast.

A scream that rips  
from the heart,  
from the soul,  
from the purest being  
of a person.

A scream of *purity*.

A scream of *confusion*.

A scream of *pain*,

throwing calmness  
into chaos—  
turning my inner peace...

into ***the Raige***.

Tossing and turning,  
defying carnal desires.

A one-sided lust.

Looks turn to force,  
and years of friendship  
are turned to  
memories.

Nothing can bring  
them back after  
the attack.

Fingers dive and  
a tongue darts.  
While the object of this obsession  
cries and resists.  
What beast this crime is.  
A sin unequalled.  
The desired act  
so far from one  
called love.  
A forced desire  
upon the unwilling.

Secure in the knowledge  
silence would be  
the only retribution.  
Who would talk of what  
was occurring?  
Shame-faced and crying,  
what would her  
boyfriend say?  
A silence and shame  
so deep as to  
hide this Beast's actions,  
and his hopes that if  
success is not his  
tonight,  
a second attempt  
could easily be made  
without fear.

## A Tension Span

Hands grope and pull and feel.  
Resistance against  
his grasp is hard,  
but in the end successful.

Free again,  
yet caught.  
Once again pulled  
to the floor—  
held against her will  
for one more try.

Still no success,  
if you could call  
rape a success.

A shirt and a bra  
ripped from their charge,  
exposing breasts,  
furthering his  
desires.

A slap, a push, a shove.  
Desperation  
shows in her eyes  
and fuels her strength.  
Squirming free  
to cover up and  
run from this Beast,  
only to be caught  
on the stairs...  
and drug once again to the floor.

I am unaware of these actions,  
    so far away,  
    too far away to keep her safe.  
Not there to hear the screams.  
Not there to stop this Beast.  
Not there to protect the one I love.

A grab and a rip.  
    Somehow the Beast is  
    now exposed.  
Her head is grasped  
    and pushed towards  
    the tool that governs  
    his desires.  
        She pulls away and resists.  
He tries again,  
    another failure.  
If sex could not be his,  
    well, there are other  
    ways of pleasure.  
        But if coercion does  
        not work,  
force remains the only way.  
If he cannot get  
    this optional pleasure,  
    then sex will be his.

Thrown to the floor and straddled,  
    her pants are undone  
    and pulled down.  
Oh, how she resists,  
    but she is only so strong.

## A Tension Span

He tries to initiate the act,  
but desperation guides  
her arms  
and his actions  
are foiled.

Realization comes upon him that  
sex will not be his tonight.  
She remains unconquered.  
And he leaves.

*“Come see me when you’re ready.”*  
Words chill to the bone.  
And words can haunt.

Now she is faced  
with whether or not to  
keep secret was has  
and almost happened.

What will her boyfriend say or do?  
She does not know.

And the tears in her eyes  
do not make the  
decision any easier.

She wanted to keep me safe  
by leaving me ignorant.  
Hiding her problems  
to hide her shame.  
I was not a part of this.

There was nothing I could  
have done  
and nothing I can do  
to change what happened.

She fears telling me,  
afraid I will blame  
her for  
letting this happen.

*I thought she knew  
me better.*

I could only hold her tight  
when she told me what happened.  
I could not tell her  
what I felt.

I pushed feelings aside and comforted her.

But now I feel *the Raige*.

And that bastard will pay.

**Hell**

April 10, 1992

12:10.47 A.M.

**Jonathan Grimm**

Life ain't gettin' easy,  
gettin' harder every day.  
The debts are on the rise  
and we're just startin' to pay.  
Hell yes, our scream's defiant!  
We don't know when to quit.  
Your goal is our success,  
but you just don't know how to give it.  
How about our morals and our scores?  
Everything is just goin' down  
like 42nd Street's cheap whores.  
Why did you think that I'd frown?  
Down on our knees in supplication;  
We never asked for your leadership.  
Who gives a damn about consolation  
when the winners and losers both take the trip?  
I hope I'm not asking for too much,  
maybe a little freedom (it's our right).  
Life just ain't full of pleasantries and such.  
Maybe your goals shouldn't be so far out of sight.  
Where did we start to go wrong?  
Maybe we should listen to that rock 'n roll singer  
who just sings his song,  
'stead of pointing his finger.  
You're asking for a rose garden  
without thinking 'bout a single thorn.  
Maybe you should look at your Eden,  
your arguments are getting worn.  
If there is such a thing as heaven,  
my wishes would do me quite well.  
Because your deadly sins number seven—  
*Your* next door is an elevator straight to...



**Smiling with tears in my eyes**

I walked up the path to my house smiling.

So maybe tears were in my eyes,  
but I hadn't let any go,  
down my cheeks,  
towards my heart.

You know how it goes.

I looked up at the stars.  
They didn't answer my call,  
though they winked  
at my problems.

I wanted to go back to a better time and place.

But the times have changed  
and the places have grown old.  
My friends, they fade away.  
And the streets grow cold.

I used to care for the world around me.

Now here I sit,  
an outcast in their words.  
And actions slam me down.  
Down to what I am.

Down on my knees I scream for an answer.

But only I know what to do.  
I know what I need.  
But I cannot have it  
as long as you are gone...

## A Tension Span

I ran to the edge of sanity and took a good long look over the edge. I bent down to tie my shoelace and fell over. I put out both hands to try to regain purchase, but instead only grabbed handfuls of reality. I tore reality asunder on my trip to insanity's dismal depths, creating shimmering ribbons of that which is and yet to be. I withdrew from my pocket a needle and thread, and hastily sewed up what I had done, not taking time to look around me. By then it was too late— I was back on sanity's ground and had lost my chance at achieving my perfect fantasy through divine insanity. My body would only have wagged its tongue and said monosyllable “ogs” in conversations with my newfound friends, the vegetables. I looked down and once again saw my shoe was untied, but this time I double knotted it.

---

...Do not love me because you think you must love,  
love me because you know you must love...

---

...I've never been one to dwell upon the past, but my first girlfriend still tugs at my heart, if not my loins any longer. Once I finally got over her physically (sexually), life could pretty well go on as normal. She was no longer a longed for possibility, she had changed too much. When we were together, we were innocent. And that's why we can't be any more...

**I Ask Not**

An attempt at  
Metallica-style lyrics

And though **I** scream in defiance,  
and yell in rage.

You continue to ignore the truth.

The burning eyes  
and questions you cannot answer  
plead you guilty.

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to forgive you or damn you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

**Truth!**

Do you know the word or the meaning?

The words that they say  
and the things that you do,  
ignore the one fact,  
*that it's killing you...*

from the inside.

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to forgive you or damn you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

**Peace** is a farce,  
used to control your flailing mind.  
An anchor to an ever-changing reality.

**They *hold* you, they *tell* you,  
they push you away.**

They know  
    **who you are!**  
    **what you hide!**  
    what you could be.

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to *forgive* you or *damn* you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

***Solitude*** is an escape not open to you.

Chains hang 'round your innocent head.

They rip and they bind.

**You're *lost* and you're blind!**

**Humiliation** their tool.

**Greed** is their drive.

**Success** from the power they steal from you.

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to *forgive* you or *damn* you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

Sirens they blare, and lights blind your eyes.

Your senses are swamped and  
your will to live is has died.

**Freedom** is the impossible dream.

They offer you a chance...

**That you will never get.**

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to forgive you or damn you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

Stealing life is their hobby.

**Torture** their creed.

**Money** abounds,

to fill their greeds.

You know they are wrong,  
*yet they sound so right...*

*Though you do not know why.*

**I ask not...** for **I** do not wish to know.

**I ask not...** for **you** do not wish to know.

**I ask not to forgive you or damn you instead**

**I ask not for *burning*, the *martyred*, the dead.**

But **you** gave in.

And

**You** said “yes”.

**You lived by their rules.**

**You died by their beliefs.**

**You bastard.**

**A Hole In the Floor**

No date, no time– but I just wrote it.

I came here lookin' for surrender  
But instead I found my dreams  
lyin' shattered by that look in her eyes.  
She was crying and she swore  
as I slowly shut the door.  
She pulled out the gun and pulled the trigger.

Now there's a hole in the floor  
and my baby's in my arms  
and I'm raining kisses down upon her head.  
The gun lies smoking on the floor  
She said she can't take anymore.  
So I'm shaking and holding her tight.

I remember that cold November morn  
'cause I saw my baby for the first time.  
That way she wore that dress and cracked a smile.  
She followed me back home.  
Tired of being so alone.  
It felt so good to see her sleeping in my bed.

She said that she thought she was in love.  
I knew better, but said she was right.  
We walked on through the night and into the day.  
She held my hand so tight,  
Her eyes gleaming in the light.  
She needed so much, so I gave her all I could.

Now there's a hole in the floor  
and my baby's in my arms  
and I'm raining kisses down upon her head.  
The gun lies smoking on the floor  
She said she can't take anymore.  
So I'm shaking and holding her tight.

I guess it's time for me to make it right.  
I said I would love her **forever**, not just *tonight*...

**And I know I will.**

---

**S**omebody please tell me why.  
Inn**o**cent, too young to die.  
A **ch**ild's death is a pain to bear.  
How can a **l**ife so young come to an end so soon?  
Experiences just **t** begun.  
How can I show you **u** how I feel?  
Now you are gone **a**nd I am alone.  
And how I cry, with **t**ears of love.

I cry in **SOLITUDE**.

## A Tension Span

The problem comes in defining the relationship between a woman and a man. The emotions fight through the years of negative images pumped in by the adult conspiracy of what is “Right” and what is most definitely “Wrong”.

The age of Free Love is over and we are now confronted with the fallout of the generations that will not allow us to do things the way they did them. Hypocrisy abounds and the views are distorted to meet their beliefs. What they thought and felt are the same things we think and feel, they just grew up in a different environment. Neither side is right and neither side is wrong. The argument “You just don’t understand” doesn’t work because they just might. I’m not saying they are always right, though, because many have been emotionally raped of happiness by guilt and depression, self-imposed and otherwise inflicted.

The generations have gone full circle, from conservative, to moderate, to liberal, to radical, and now back to conservative. Because of problems such as teenage pregnancy, the abortion controversy, unsafe sex and the spread of AIDS, the role of sexuality has changed, maybe even matured, as emotions break the rules the mind can never enforce...



## **Case History #1**

### **All men are assholes.**

This fact has led many unsuspecting females to believe that their “Mr. Right” (when he finally does come along) should have a fatal flaw hidden somewhere, and therefore should not be trusted. No man is perfect and no man can meet a girl’s expectations. Remember back when you were a kid? You were so sure that a Prince was going to waltz into your life, sweep you off your feet, marry you, and then you’d live happily ever after. Sorry to ruin it for you, but that just doesn’t happen.

On a more positive note, there are guys out there who are open with their feelings, can be kind and compassionate, understand what a woman feels and needs, and are not afraid to cry. Too bad they’re gay. Just kidding, there really are guys out there who are sensitive to your needs. Finding, understanding, and then keeping them is a whole different deal entirely.

The same guys who you always suspected were axe-murderers just might be one of the kindest men you’ll ever find. The facade people (men especially) put on to cover up what they really feel on the inside can be very convincing to all but the most trusting. Why trusting? Because the only way to get through the shell is to have what is on the inside trust you enough to step out into the light and show its “true self”. For some people this comes easy, some with coercion, some in the heat of the moment, and others, never. The hard part is to be understanding to all parts once this has happened. Are you willing to take on the bad with the good? Is it going to be worth it? Will you stick it out to the end? What does he expect? Why?

And how are you going to deal with how you feel about him?

## Case History #2

### What is a slut?

The perceptions a girl has about herself and her reputation do not always jive. I'm not saying girls are deluded and don't see themselves for what they are, but in a lot of cases this is true. Girls (as well as guys) have the great ability to judge themselves by what they wish to be. For some it works out okay, others become hard upon themselves to be better (smarter, thinner, prettier, etc.), and a few accept themselves for who they really are.

Does appearance play too important a role in women's lives? How long did you work on your hair this morning? When was the last time you had internal mental frustration over which outfit to wear on a date? Or for just "going out"? How much have you spent on makeup? Clothes? When was the last time you avoided dessert to keep your figure? Are you satisfied with how you look right now? **Why bother?** The last time I asked a girl why she went through all the work she said, "I do it to look good for you." Sure, the time for the perm, watching her weight, the time in front of the mirror, the makeup, the food, the stress, the clothes, the workouts- ***all for me?*** (And she still won't put out?!?) I don't get it.

Some girls push looks to the extreme, and then wonder when they get into trouble. Occasionally girls are branded as being a slut. What is a slut? Most guys say that they'd love to have a slut. (Don't worry— one one-night stand later they'd wish it would last.) Girls work hard to avoid the rep of being a slut. Do good looking girls get called sluts because girls who are insecure with themselves feel jealous? As for dating, what usually happens is up to how many advances a girl can divert, not what the girl can elicit.

Sure, sex is a part of it. That's what I was always told. But then I heard some girls who were virgins being called sluts. I didn't get it (and I still don't). I know I've been wrong with definitions in the past, but I thought I was right about this one. Once again, I think the attitudes of those involved determine who or what a slut is. I don't make allowances for girls who want to get fucked by everything with muscles, or look longingly at pictures in magazines, or are just plain at ease talking about sex with guys, but by definition a girl who screws more than one guy is a slut. But does this mean widows are done for? What about girls who were just testing the sexual waters and played around with two, maybe three guys while she was a teenager? And if three is okay, what about five? Or ten?

Or the whole football team after playoffs?

**Where is the line drawn?**

### Case History #3

#### **Insecurity rules.**

Once you finally capture that guy you've been following around for weeks (or maybe days if you couldn't help yourself), you have to keep him around for as long as he's useful to you. As soon as he gets a wandering eye or a bad attitude, you're better off without him. *Right?* A guy who looks around must not be satisfied with what he has. **Shouldn't he?** A guy who says he doesn't know what he feels must be trying to avoid commitment. *Isn't he?* If you set your expectations too high, you'll never get your man to live up to them. You just might dump one of the best guys available.

What would that feel like to dump your closest match, knowing you'll never find anyone better? But just because he feels right doesn't mean he isn't a mean, spiteful **asshole** like the rest of his sub-species. Don't anchor yourself down, but the life of a free spirit can become terribly lonely.

Every move you make and risk you take can be the cement to your foundation or the root of your breakup. Isn't that reassuring? I'll never be the one to place responsibility on the woman to keep the relationship together (it always has taken two to tango), but what you say and do has a lot of influence on whether the relationship grows stronger, stunts, or grows apart.

**Can one man love one woman?**

**Can one woman love one man?**

**Simultaneously?**

To quote Hamlet, (Act III, Scene i, line 73)

**“Ay, there's the rub!”**

*A children's story* by *Jonathan Grimm*, esquire.

A *little fuzzy bunny*

is so cute and cuddly.

A *little fuzzy bunny*

set out to make friends with the world.

The world was an evil place,

but everywhere the *little fuzzy bunny* went,  
people were happy.

One day the *little fuzzy bunny*

met up with *Trav*.

(The *Trav* is an ego in human form.)

The *Trav* explained the evils of *sin*.

The *little fuzzy bunny* was shocked and amazed.

So... he went back to his little school,

got all the baby fuzzy bunnies drunk  
and pissed on the principal's shoes.

With three hundred drunk critters

and a mouthful of curse,  
the *little fuzzy bunny* was kicked out of school.

Now the *little fuzzy bunny* sits at home

with his girlfriend in one paw  
and a joint in the other.

*The moral of the story is...*

A *little fuzzy bunny* is a terribly funny thing to waste.

**You're breathing heavy.**

Sweat beads on your forehead and I wipe it away with a piercing glance. I press my fingers to your lips to taste, then to my eyes, the sweat causing a tear to form, then drop down my face. The light shines from behind me, illuminating only half of my face. You wonder at what is revealed, and at what is left hidden.

**I touch you.**

Turmoil wracks your mind. So much to say, so much you need, so much you want to feel. You say you can't. I say you can. You say you are scared and want to run. I tell you to run to me, let me end your fears. Your smile warms my heart, a welcome emotion I thought long gone, almost as gone as your innocence. But that, too, remains.

**You look up.**

The same fingers that can point and accuse now enter upon the physical battleground. You want to think that I won't hurt you, yet are afraid because that is how you are always left. Hurt. The pain. A heart that longs to reach out, but can only receive forced pleasure and a bad reputation. Where do you find love? You do not know, because you have never found it.

**Our eyes meet.**

You look deep into my eyes and feel a sense of comfort that is completely foreign to you. You have never felt so on the edge, and then so quickly at ease. Your suspicions turn into curiosity, and then you know that you are the one who is the aggressor. You are the one in control.

**The sun has set and now it is dark.**

Shining down from the heavens, the stars answer your dreams for a lover, a friend, someone you can trust. Someone who would never hurt you. You feel like this night would never have happened had you not been through so much pain, yet remained so hopeful. They say that the night conceals, but it is the night that reveals what you feel deep within yourself.

***And when I say your name...***

**I'm gonna turn you on.**

## My Little World - A Guidebook

Some say in the *Days of Lore* that there was an evil magician by the name of *Aldrain* who promised to destroy the known world. The beginnings of his plans involved obliterating the *Kurun* mountain range. The removal of the mountains would alter the rainfall on the fertile *Gile Plains*, one of the major agricultural suppliers for the surrounding countryside.

The *King's* plea for heroes was met by a small band of adventurers who eventually killed *Aldrain* with a diamond sword, but not before a section of the mountain range had been completely destroyed. The resulting chasm was named *Kurun Chasm* by the *King*, but the most important result was the creation of the *Edge of Heaven*.

When *Aldrain* had traveled originally to *Endlewarr*, he went by boat along the *Rainbow River*. At that time the *Rainbow River* ran along the eastern side of the *Kurun Mountains* as far south as the *IronHeart Woods*. When *Aldrain* removed the  *Holding Stone* just north of the present day *Edge of Heaven*, the river dropped away from its magically assisted course and created the *Rainbow Falls*. This beautiful attraction has since dug down to the granite beds under the  *Holding Stone* and is assumed to have halted its length at 483 feet. The falls accentuate the *Havlin Mountain*, the tallest mountain among the *Kurun Mountains*. The unnaturally flat and grassy summit of *Havlin* allows a perfect view of almost all of the northern known world.

Glacial movements hundreds of thousands of years ago have resulted in the natural barrier between the *Western* and *Eastern Lands* known as the *Glacial Cliff*. In some areas the cliff is a sheer face exceeding 800 feet in height. A few notable exceptions are *Horseshoe Pass* and the *Orgeron Descent*, two places where the cliffside is interrupted by a gentle pass.



**Discipline**

by Steven A. Kirkland

The moonlight never seemed to be so dark and cold as it was that night. The chill in the air matched the feelings in my heart as I was forced to say goodbye. The tears in my eyes betrayed what I felt- but I did not care.

The happiness came in the early days, back when I was young and carefree. I understood that it would not last forever. I was never one for being young and naive. I guess my life was interesting, but I'll never be quite able to tell you why. To sum it all up, I guess it's time to move on...

*starting with this goodbye.*

**Goodbye to my friends.**

You know who you are and why. Remember what you want to be and never stray from what you feel is right.

**Goodbye to my family.**

You stayed with me through it all (and we're still alive and kicking so it all must have worked out). With humble aspirations and great expectations you shoved me through this life of mine. *Look ma, I did it.*

**Hooray, hooray for the home team.**

I had a friend who was fond of saying that.

It was from a stupid song, but somehow the words always fit.

Now that I am at the end of this little journey, I still look at that wall and wonder why the sky is blue. Sure, light refracts through water vapor, but that just doesn't cut it for me.

*I want more.*

## A Tension Span

It had been a mercilessly long and hot day with the approaching cold front finally pushing its way through the humid air, bringing a much awaited thunderstorm. The rain would begin with a quick downpour, then a steady shower to last through the night. The first drops are felt just a few miles to the west of here, but the rain has yet to hit...

I grabbed at her tight little butt with both hands and squeezed double handfuls of her ass. She let loose a purely sexual squeak and pounced on me, driving her fingernails into my back and shoving her tongue through my open lips. I tossed her on the hood of my car and she started to purr like a content cat after a hard day's work. Thunder rolled in the distance and it was cooling just fast enough for her to have goose bumps all over her body.

A hand upon my crotch and a look of longing drove me to that low neckline. Her tank top bit the dust and she casually took off her bra in plain view. She knew that the line of careful playfulness had just been crossed. She wanted me in her so bad that I knew that tonight would be the night.

I reached down to unbutton her shorts, not quite expecting to find that she had beaten me to it. She shoved her crotch into my face and I took to her like a desert bandit to water. I let my tongue go wild as it caressed and slid across everything that caused pleasure. The tingle and the tongue sent shockwaves through her body, and the grasp at the back of my head told me that she was ready.

Her hands slid across my chest, then she leaned forward to suck on me just a little. She licked up the side of my neck, then threw her body next to mine as she kissed me and tugged at my jeans. My Levis took residence at my ankles and I kicked to take them off, succeeding only in tripping myself and pulling us both to the ground. She took one look at my rubber duckie boxer shorts and couldn't resist a laugh, then she pulled them off and whistled "Qu-ack!" at my throbbing, well, y'know, dick.

I rolled her onto her back and pulled her panties off as slowly as I could to show that I wanted to so bad yet wasn't going to rush her first time. She grabbed at little Eddie (that's my dick, in case you're wondering) and pulled him up to meet her wet pussy. The Edster slid right in and she looked like she was going to implode it felt so good and so different and so big and so deep into her. I started slowly rocking back and forth on her until she raised up her legs enough to give it the full effect. I pushed it up to full throttle and let her have it as I sent my shot of love deep into her. She sent back a wave of juices as she had her first orgasm, almost ripping my head off in the process.

Then it rained, I pulled out, and we went home. She moved away that summer and I never saw her again. I must admit, she was a fun fuck and surprise, surprise, I did love her...

-----

12:57.20 A.M. June 25, 1992.

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I wrote that almost two year ago, and then last night there was a knock on the door... and I was right- she still is a fun fuck.

## **“What do I want for my birthday?”**

To begin with, I want the women in my life to be happy.

I want a deeper understanding of the emotions of those who surround me on a day to day basis, as well as those who come to me in their time of need. To better themselves I must better myself to point them in the direction in which they desire to go.

I want a broader base of fundamental problems that manifest themselves in women, for through understanding comes the hope for overcoming. The hells women are put through and put themselves through should be eradicated, for women deserve to be happy. This is just.

I want to know of the failures that mark these women’s lives. Things that lead to the downfall of one relationship can easily lead to the downfall of another. If the chain of pain can be broken by finding and replacing (or reinforcing) the weaker links, all can benefit.

I want to know of the successes that mark these women’s lives. To succeed is the ultimate goal of work. The things that bring about joy in women can vary between reading a good (but very long) book to hiring someone to bump off an ex, from sticking to the workout schedule to making a new friend, from making the grade to helping someone in need. Not everyone can be the inventor of Play-doh, but every individual has accomplishments they can be and are proud of.

To delve deeper into my wants, I begin with where it began:

The original women in my life...

### **Ardis**

I want her to understand that there is nothing wrong with showing how she feels. She needs to have a shoulder to cry on because she carries the burden of a hard life- a life shoved upon her by circumstance, not by choice. I may have wronged her once, but I have come to believe it was not in my saying yes to that desire but in saying no to that relationship. I do not know if I will ever again find one who will be my mental equivalent, as Shawn puts it, but I think I started out in good hands.

### **Jill**

I want her to have a good life. What began as a huge crush has blossomed into an understanding of temperance and choice, as well as a sign of maturity. She has great potential and good attributes, physical as well as mental. Being with her taught me that my wants and desires are just that: my wants and desires. The lives and choices of other people are at their discretion, I can only advise and offer opinions and viewpoints that have been overlooked. Even though I wanted her, I understood she was not to be mine, and I humbly let her go with my blessing.

### **Michelle**

I want her to have a good marriage. I know very little of her life, but I knew enough to know that she was strong on the inside. Though we were only a dating adventure of convenience, a first date is something I will always remember.

### **Tami**

I want her to have a good life with Ed. She has made her choices in life, and I must agree that they have been good ones. It was because of her that I began to write, and I will be forever grateful. She also helped me to understand that this is a society in which we do not always get what we want, as well as enlightened me to one of my most painful quotes: “Why is it that the one person who seems so perfect for you is just as perfect for someone else?” I understand now what it means to love from a distance, because that seems to be the best.

### **Liz**

I want Liz to be happy, too. Very few people in Bloomfield know of Liz because she was there for me at a turning point in my life. The summer before my Junior year brought about many changes in my heart, as I fell from grace in my love life and emotionally crumbled. I had determined that I no longer could keep my relationship with Ardis because of reasons too numerous and awkward to mention, so I became severely depressed and suicidal. Liz may not have done much for my life, but she did stop me from hitting bottom. She started me back on the right track with her positive attitude and winning smile. Those nights we spent together will remain with me forever because of how much I wanted and how little I knew, yet how much I understood.

## Carey

I want Carey to get the love she needs. She has always needed an anchor to this world, and I hope that there will always be someone there to fill that need. From outrageous to bizarre, she kept my attention through Cross Country through her humor. Her ability to stick with it even when she knew she could never win humbled me. And the times when she was serious and scared helped me to understand that there always needs to be someone there for you. Someone you can talk to. Someone you can open your heart to without losing it. Someone who loves enough to understand yet not take advantage. Someone who cares.

And this is what I then chose to be.

This is my past.

This is why I can cry.

This is why I can smile.

## ----- *Interlude:*

Many events have shaped my life, but a few stand out because they might shed some light on why I do (or **don't** do) some things:

My first love's father was and still is an alcoholic. While I went out with Ardis I was constantly aware of all the problems caused by her father's drinking. I learned of the reactions and I heard the stories of what he would do when he was drunk. I saw how it ruined a little part of her soul and I could do nothing. I will never be able to forget of how she would talk of him with tears streaming down her face.

And I will never drink because of them.

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*Some quotes from “Life In An Asylum”*

From : *Hide and go seek*

A Dew in hand and a nation underfoot.

From : *Good Bye & Good Mourning*

*Rip and tear and torn asunder.* I guess that's my life, one big blunder.

*Fingers beckon, call me forth from hiding. Out into the light, blinding.*  
*Apathy my stepping stone, cowardice my ascension,*  
*ignorance my control.*

The end draws near and far and a picture of a stick figure  
flying a kite.

Ignorance is bliss, but a practical joke is funnier.  
*Good Bye & Good Mourning.*

From : *O vey es mir – (O woe is me)*

*And the infirmity of my soul can only be matched by  
the infirmity of my mind.*

Back once again, at the helm. The sea of life, the see of life, the C of life. Passing as sane, failing at sanity, lost in confusion, confounded by illusion, living on misconceptions, acting on impulses, dictating on a hunch, and stuck in a rut. Other than that, quite able to get along right and mightily. So ye see, and so it be-- pardon me, but I feel a desire to fill this barf-bag called life with chunks of insincerity and unfounded causes. Look at me, dammit. OK, you can stop now.



I feel exonerated of my crimes, my passion is in its death throes and my peanut butter is starting to look quite nice to my quivering taste buds. Oh, how I would love to caress her lips with my tongue, but I cut it out, (her lips, that is), so I cannot. O vey es mir, no shit, no shoe shine, no shame, no gain, no pass go, no collect \$200, go straight to hell.

Steerrike two. Pick a pocket of two-pence pull up a chair and smile. Look pretty and cute, so I can tattoo my name on your toes. I lick your fingers, clean from guilty associations. I look into your eyes, but you are oh so dead. I cannot explain my feelings. I cannot explain my words. I cannot explain why the wind blows, or why the sage knows, how to live your life. I only know what works for me. Day in, day out, I follow my rules I set. I look, I listen, I touch, I feel. I love you so much, yet still I want to be a meatball.

Though I lose my past, I still retain my stranglehold on the present.

Ha, you underfunded illegitimate malechild (You poor bastard— get it?)

I taped my eyes shut and could see the hate in the world even better. I taped my mouth shut and the lies resounded through my ever observant ears. I put cotton in my ears and felt the chill in the air. I left for a place where there was no hate, no remorse, no shame. I found that place right where I left, I just hadn't closed my eyes. Then I woke up and it was all the same, I just had tape all over the place and my ears filled with cotton. Oh, well.

**Now where the hell was I?** Oh yeah, sitting with a keyboard propped up on my lap, looking at a computer monitor, laying in the bed that has given me fame and shame. If you understand, you understand, if you don't, then you don't need to.

## A Tension Span

I'd really like to do some more insane ramblings (cranapple pie and Kleenex concealing a fleck of flak from my brick o' brack. *Loogie ho and gang way Jay McCabe* and lost vertigo spinning and spanning my bridge of thought and emotional high of greeting and conjecture) but for some odd reason I need to get some things off my chest and into my lap.

*Ah*, hell. It's getting late so be jovial to yourself and maybe next time I'll get to take off this really long-sleeved white shirt they have so eloquently tied around my waist with my arms behind my back. Sorry I didn't write so much, but my nose was beginning to hurt from so much typing.

From : *The cactus*

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall want,  
but only get if I have expressed written approval.

Of fame, fortune and sorrow, my picture costing me  
a thousand words has brought the world to its knees.

I looked at the wall and walked through it to the other side, where only I could. This scared the people and made them run. They called me a miracle worker and said I should never have been locked up. They cried for forgiveness of their sins...

I woke up and kissed the wall. *It likes me.*

The cactus, so desolate and alone, kinda like a lake or bone.

The paper airplane I made flew over the walls. They let me out sometimes. They say I need to see and feel the air. The ten minutes seem like an eternity. I know what it will be like, even before they open the door. I can see the future, so I hope you don't mind being dead in a few years. I sleep and I wake, awaiting that day when I can be free.  
*To kill you dead.*

From : *A turn of the screw*

Switches are thrown and light floods my arena like a cloudburst in May. I ask not of the blinding face, for mine is so red. I withdrew a stapler and stapled my hand to the air, ripping away a section of sky for my own purposes. Light refracts through in shades of blue and the tiny sliver of wind encased within blew at my slightest whim.

*Death claims the pheasant and peas addle my brain.*

But I am insane and unscrupulous. I do as I please so I read and write with fervid pleasure. The night's embrace and anxiety's grip hold true on those who believe. The answer lies within yourself, it will never tell the truth as long as it is there. Remove the masks, stop playing the games. The party is over. Get used to life.

From : *A shattered lobotomy*

The mirror tells me lies in the night. It whispers that they are right. They think I'm rehabilitated. In their eyes alone. The commission stares with grey eyes and blank faces. They were once so scared of me. I answer their questions and spread my lies until they say I'm OK to go free. Good-bye, I'll miss you, four padded walls, my estate for so many years. They let me keep my really long sleeved shirt (they understand, they have girlfriends, too [speaking of which, she can do the laundry now.]) I say farewell to my friends and shove an icepick through that fucking mirror. A shattered lobotomy stops its lies. I walk out the door, luggage in hand.

*The night is ours... and the day is within our grasp.*

From : *Within the grasp of a desperate man*

Another page brings forth the rage and I must bear the burden of sins so deep I can only wish I could hide, for I cannot. Though I am a free man, I am chained by my mind and shackled by my emotions. Love has a permanence that always endures, while a broken heart can cloud the thoughts of purity. Memories of the good times endure. A crack in one's heart can be overlooked in time, but even though forgotten, it is never gone.

They say man controls his destiny. I never have been one to believe destiny would ever be brought to its knees in submission. *Fate* lies broken and battered, *destiny* lies a smoldering husk of what it once was, and I throw *caution* to the wind to be buffeted by an uncaring world.

*The reigns of time shift and sway, yet still remain  
within the grasp of a desperate man.*

*The purest form of sanity*

I sit deep in thought, for I can do no other. I am resolute in the continuance of my outcries. Even the briefest of lapses can bring about complete chaos. I can handle the loss, but my pride lying wounded, under heavy sedation and bandaged to the point of blatant idiocracy, would not be pleasing to the eye or the emotional center of my brain.

Sometimes they let me see what I wrote in the past. I say that that kind of literature scares me in a certain way difficult for me to pin a name on. Maybe because I like it so. It seems so natural, so like me.

It isn't sedated and suppressed like I am now. Or claim to be. I still assure myself that they will bear the yoke of submission, not I. Then I shall laugh, and then shall I cry.

"Ha ha ha, you poor bastards."

The words lack the charm they once had. Had I known I would have gone insane, would I have uttered them? If so, would it have been in *acceptance*, or *defiance*? It is whispered among those less favored by your kind that those who are insane are far better off than those who are sane. Would not unsane be proper? No, it is *insane*, the purest form of sanity. An overwhelming sense of understanding that would encompass everything.

Still, the ticking in my head and the ringing in my ears  
bring me back to what is deemed the "real" world.  
I asked for a rose garden, but this penthouse suite  
just has easy access to the roof.  
I can look at the stars at night and cry,  
for I know the stars must cry for us.  
They are so longed for, yet so feared  
because they are the wardens of the night.  
Guard well, my friends, this night I must endure.  
Dreams of forevermore come on the wisps of my waking life,  
as the wave of a caring darkness encloses around me.

## A Tension Span

From : *A femailbox magically appears*

And a lonely man went forth into the world, tired of his life of a hermit. Impossible goals and broken promises met him full force, knocking his self-esteem to the depths of loathing.

*I sometimes wonder when the wind blows if my sanity sways like a tortured tree. I don't know.*

From : *The key rests in my hand*

So misguided, he believes it's over. Why does he complain so loudly, curse her so soundly, ignore and inquire? He says it's over, but then why does he cry? The memories can be moved, but to forget is a blessing he will never have.

The world rests in the palm of my hand, but with a quick flip of my wrist, I spooie this world of lust into the night air. A tablespoon or two, how far up in you? **I question your beliefs... for I have few.**

From : *and had a dream that was like...*

**I stand steadfast, so that others may be sheltered from the storm. I care not for the buffeting, for I am strong, and my friends (even though they often do not feel it) are worthy.**

I prod my prey, for they understand no other. Oh, how I wish I could be stupid again. I take that back, a curse worse than death. Through ignorance, we can hide the pain for we know not what we are missing. If we do not experience love, we will not miss it. This *i*pity, for those who have tried and lost, remain better than those who have never experienced anything at all. We moan and we cry, but in the end, we cannot say it was all wrong. Love sweeps through our body, our senses, our mind, and our emotions. It can not be swept out and thrown away like yesterday's trash. It endures.

*I smell of the smoke, surrounded by the ions of eons.*

*I care not for the care is free.*

*The eyes stare deep into my shoes and ask what kind of socks I've been eating.*

*I pounded on the asterisk, but instead I was eight.  
But I had never before been that young.*

*A shadow slides past my window, yet even though it comes to consume me,  
I hold a flashlight ready.*

*The fiery emotions collided with the cold stares to form a cloud within my room. It began to sprinkle, then it poured, as emotions finally rained on my masquerade. I collapsed in a heap of trouble, burst everyone's bubble and had a dream that was like...*

*From : I hear the tiger*

*My head is on fire and the flames are dripping down to my chest, consuming my heart in desires and wishes and wants that I know I should not have. The inferno races down to the floor, charring the earth at its merest presence. I reach up, yet fall to my knees. I pull a knife from my handy dandy utility belt and cut myself off from the rest of the world. The zipper throws sparks and I am thrown clear. The door opens, then closes after I have passed through. The crowd cheers. Then I kill them all. Ha, ha, ha, well, you know the rest.*

*If you don't point the gun at your head, there's no reason to worry if someone pulls the trigger. So with the double-barreled shotgun in hand and an eight on its side (or maybe infinity) imprinted on my forehead, I search for some fool with an itchy trigger finger.*

## A Tension Span

From : *One last jitter*

*Close your eyes. Come float with me.*

I fished in my pockets and withdrew my chunk of sky from one of my previous visits. **It blew me a kiss.**

I was so scared of looking at you for I thought your eyes had rotted out and someone had planted begonias in their place.

Suddenly I feel as if I'm rushing up through the waters of a pool with water so clean and pure I become as one with it. The fluid streaming past my face brings tears to my eyes because I do not wish for it to end. Memories wash over me and I see life before me. The world rushes towards me with renewed fury and I am catapulted into my roommate's awaiting hug.

*The shadows grow long and the day is done*

I plucked out the dagger you had driven so cruelly into my fragile heart and used it to mount my assault upon your glass house. With impure thoughts and carnal lusts, I pursue with raw animal instincts. The scent is in the air and you can not deny me. You wish for it so much, what else can I do but give in to you? I gave you my heart, and though you treat it like a pincushion, *I still love you.*

**A stiff tie and formal attire drag me towards their dominion. Stuffy and upright, I crave freedom. The fish hooks of liberty drag on my soul, ripping chains from their unwilling victim.** The screwdriver is back and is in search of a Zebra. The air pounds with the same excitement that flows through your veins as I lower you to the bed, then begin to caress your...



Whole body begins to shake and quiver as my tongue darts in search of those pleasure centers you hold dear. The tingle and the urge drive me farther than I dared go before, as passion draws me towards that which you desire more than I can ever know. Emotions settle in their fury, spasms racing *love*, *lust* and *sex* through your *heart*, your *soul*, your *body*. Fingers search in the dark. A touch, a glance. One look, one feel. Your eyes betray your passions. You look at me with pleading eyes, your mind made up so long ago. But as I begin to move your body like I move your heart, I begin to like what I am doing. I crave and hunger for that feeling you give me. And I want more.

This little tongue, telling lies and tempting fortunes, has led me on a merry quest. Something to do, I guess. I like the look you get when your body is screaming that it can't take any more while it's gasping for it even harder. I can sometimes think I'm going to spoovie just at the sight, but I know what it takes to bring on the smile that makes it all worthwhile.

**The shadows grow long and the day is done.**

I wander through my life in search of a purpose, a cause, a *dream*. Instead I find that I am already living one. It is so hard to explain, yet so easy to do. I think you know how I feel, because sometimes you can see *eternity*, too.

**I know, because I see it in *your eyes*  
when you stare into *mine*.**

## A Tension Span

From : *Epilogue : So young, so stupid, so sad but true*

*You'll never find one who thinks such as I, with pudding in my pie and a yo! ho! ho! and a bottle of rum.*

Reality said "good-bye" so I kicked its lazy butt out the door. It landed with a thud and all my wisdom was a dud for you never came when I beckoned with my eyes, my fingers, my desires and my cute little tongue, flicking free of responsibility.

So young, so stupid, so sad but true.

You love the touch, but hate that I can make you feel it. You search for a friend, but instead find me. I may not be much, but have you ever found better? I think not and I should know, for when you cry on my shoulder and ask my advice you are true to me, as I am true to you. My patience and patients draw to an end, maybe, I don't know, but maybe...

I'd cry for forgiveness knowing full well I would not deserve it. If I took the chance, maybe followed my glance then showed you how much I care. Why do you make me feel this way? Why do I put myself through the pain? **So little time to make you mine.** I could do it, but I don't know if you want me to. The summer could be ours, but in the fall I'd be gone. My higher education drags me away, and you,

*so young, so beautiful,*

*...must remain behind.*

12:39:42 A.M.

April 10, 1992

From : *Author's Note : "Insane Ramblings"*

My disciples are well on their way to new lives and better things, but we can all pretty well agree (and if we didn't, I'd still say we did) that it's been real.

**The First, Second, and Third** – Adam, Shawn and Clay.

*All leadership entails is having followers.*

**The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth** – Dawn, Jenny and Danelle.

*All leadership entails is having a common dream.*

**The Seventh and Eighth** – Joshua and Travis.

*All leadership entails is having life.*

**The Ninth** – James.

*All leadership entails is having individuality.*

**The Tenth** – Tammy.

*All leadership entails is having love.*

No, I'm not insane, just in search of my own reality.

I guess that this is the about the end, so I think I'll leave you with what started it all...

Ha, Ha, Ha.

You poor bastard.

1:50:27 A.M.

April 10, 1992

*The*

h

e

*Seduction*

*Of*

*Dawn*

a

*Crosley*

a

n

to **Jenny**,

because if she hadn't  
been taken,  
this would have been  
about her.

\* \* \*

3 October 1992

\* \* \*

*The SODa Can - [ Intro ]*

I kept my eyes closed and could sense her hovering above me. Her legs were spread to straddle me, and her arms were slightly bent as she looked down on my sleeping body. I smiled.

She laughed and called me a faker as she collapsed on my body. I wrapped my arms around her smooth body and gave her a big hug. She ran her fingers through my hair as my hands slid down to her shorts. With a quick pull I gave her a minor snuggly.

She pantomimed slapping me and mouthed the words, “You doirty baaastahd.”

I arched my neck forward and whispered, “Gimme a kiss.” She leaned down with her lips pursed and eyes closing.

I grabbed double handfuls of butt and rolled her off me. She squealed and attacked me. The scene dropped into a passionate display of affection.

I wanted more, expected less, but still felt happy with what I had. We weren't lovers, but much more than friends. Our relationship was something we had always wanted— having another someone we could open up to with without closing up, someone to be close with when others were far away or too stifling, someone to let it all hang out with— and enjoy.

But I still wanted to fuck her.

She knew that too, but I guess that's okay.

**Chapter 1: I guess I was just dreaming**

**The SODa Can - [ Schwipp, ching ]**

“Who can understand the situations that arise when a person lives their life in the past and is dedicated to retrieving a missed chance?”

-Alex Hollings

“Alex, you hairy butt, you’re the one who had the crush on her, remember?”

-Steven A Kirkland

It’s really hard to describe how a man feels about a woman he’s in love with. Sure, you read the flowery romance novels about how “his love was a towering inferno. Passion burned throughout his soul, sending shivers of excitement through his trembling hands as he caressed her virgin earlobe.” I don’t know about the rest of the male species, but when I’m in love I don’t know what the hell I’m feeling. That’s when I know– schwipp, ching– I’m whipped.

I never really understood this strange attraction I had for her. She could be so naive, yet so damn understanding. She had been taken advantage of throughout her whole life, yet was still trusting. She’d fret and worry about other people’s problems more than the person with the problem would. I guess she was just a good kid.

I think the single most alluring aspect of her was that look she gave when she smiled.

(But I could be wrong.)

## **The SODa Can - [ Missed Chances ]**

“Where have all the birds gone? I miss that chirping chorus. The air draws cold and my breath fogs in the winter air as I walk onward.”

- Steven A Kirkland

It wasn't until my senior year in high school that I came to appreciate my feelings towards her, as well as come to a conclusion of how I was going to deal with them. She had done her best to help other people so I decided that someone should help her. I've said it before and I'll say it again— “Everyone needs a shoulder to cry on, and when that shoulder isn't around, find a reliable back-up quick!”

Of course this great plan never really came about. The situations sucked and the timing was worse. I tried to become more familiar and open with her in hopes that she would grow to trust me also. I wanted so much to hold her in my arms and comfort her as she was finally swept up in emotion and was able to “dump on me” her worries, fears, and past life-hell experiences. Maybe I was too greedy. Maybe I'm an emotional vulture.

Where did I miss my chances?

I hoped to be a friend, even though I only ended up being a Senior hangin' out with Junior women.

I wanted to get something accomplished over the Christmas vacation of my senior year. For the first time I had a noble plan, good intentions, and positive attitudes. But then vacation was over and the vacation faded into “what could have been”.

## A Tension Span

The bond formed during band through my writing and actions was enough to make a friend, but not enough to forge trust between us. I will admit that I could act like a butt very easily, but I think(?) that everyone knew it was in jest.

When the time finally came that she needed my help (or at least my opinions, viewpoint, ideas, and suggested courses of action), I was home from school with the flu. Some days you just have to wonder about the identity of those who micturate in your Cheerios.

From then until the end of my senior year, I was a source of ideas, yet not a person she felt she could confide in. Sure, I expected too much. I wanted her to have a breakdown with me there— knowing that I would be the one to see her at her best, her worst, and during that emotional rebuilding stage I feel good about helping along. More on that later.

The summer came and my plans for a bonding summer passed before my eyes. She was never home when I showed up at her house. Our vacations didn't jive. When we were both in town at the same time she was with friends, and I didn't wish to intrude.

I suppose I expected too much.

I guess that's what I deserved.



**The SODa Can - [ Down at the Bottom ]**

“Whispering hands— to the man above her,  
She just ain’t nothing.  
But she doesn’t like the view,  
          she doesn’t like the view,  
But he sinks himself deep.”

-Pearl Jam (of course)

Down.

Down.

Down.

Down.

Down.

Down.

and then you cry.

**The SODa Can - [ Do You Trust Me? Pt.1 ]**

“I just wanted to be friends.”

-from when I was innocent.

After three hours of discussing our lives and catching up on events we've missed in my absence, the conversation ground to a halt and we looked deep into each other's eyes. Our eyes linked our souls. Our souls mingled in ethereal purity and divine ecstasy.

I whispered, “Fuck me hard.”

She breathlessly replied, “Take me. Now.”

We dove at each other and wrestled to the floor. I said, “Oh baybee I weally, weally wuv you.” We both burst out laughing and stood up, straightening our clothes. I thought to myself, “Wow. That was fun,” as I pulled a blindfold from my right back pocket.

I asked questioningly, “Do you trust me?”

She laughed, then corrected herself when she saw that I was serious. She replied with a curt, “Yes.”

I asked, “May I?” and held up the blindfold.

A shiver went through her body. She closed her eyes and nodded. I carefully placed the bandanna over her eyes. She turned around to face me and held her hands out. I took her hands into mine and pulled her close to me.

“Yes, I trust you,” she said.

“Then let's begin.”

**The SODa Can - [ Real Life? ]**

“Personality? Check. Attitude? Check. Ideas? Check.  
Viewpoint? Check. Creativity? Check. Intelligence?  
Check. Life? Check, -oops! Sorry, has no life.”

-Steven A Kirkland (on Steven A Kirkland)

The bell rang and I walked out of the English room towards my locker. It was 11:59 A.M. and it was time for jazz band. The Bunny Book (“Watership Down”) was tossed in the top of my locker and I slammed the door. The usual vagrants loitered in the halls, content in risking a random teacher’s wrath.

I shuffled down the stairs from third to first floor.

I walked down the connecting hall between the old and new sections of the school and rounded the corner to the left, heading into the band room. Everyone was warming up (well, sort-of warming up) and there was a lot of noise and a lot of talking. Mr. N. was seated on his Blue Chair Throne, working the slide on his trombone in and out. Clay was getting ready to hit Shawn again. Shannon was looking at her music, trying like hell to avoid playing a solo. Jenny was camped out behind the piano, scribbling arithmetic nonsense into an Algebra II tablet. I looked farther on and there she was, seated behind the Korg synthesizer.

Wow.

How can anyone think that they look so bad, yet look so good to me? I slunk back to the trap set, taking the crown away from Jason. From here the band went on to play. I screwed up my song (I didn’t quite play an in-time solo), dragging the band to a halt and pretty well turning the song ‘Carnival Del Sol’ into a lost cause.

Nope, I don’t think that impressed her...

**The SODa Can - [ An Attempt ]**

“Let me show you somethin’, or maybe set the pace.  
Slipped my hand up her leg and she slapped me  
across the face. Can’t blame a man for trying.”

-Poison

She had fallen asleep, sitting backwards on the chair, leaning over the backrest. I casually picked up a chair and carefully placed it behind her. Making one last glance around the vacant band room, I slung my leg over the back of the chair like a cocky pirate in the midst of treasure and sat down behind her.

She was breathing regularly so I was sure that her English reading assignment had knocked her out cold. I leaned over her body, lightly pressing my body to hers. I wrapped my arms around her and gently squeezed. She sighed and shifted her legs, slowly scissoring the back of the chair with them.

I stretched my neck forward and began to nibble on her right ear, blowing warm bursts of air across it after every few nibbles. Her hands began to grope back and forth from their resting place on her legs.

She rolled her head to the side as my lips descended to her neck. She whispered, “oohh, yesss” as my hands slid up her stomach towards her breasts. She started moaning just a little as I began to give her a hickey. My hands finally slipped over her breasts and I began to slowly squeeze and release them. Her nipples were quite erect so I pulled on them just enough to change the rhythm and pitch of her light moaning.

Her legs had continued to scissor up and down the chair’s back and were finally spread apart and pretty well pointed straight out from the front of the chair. Her head made a roll to the other side as I switched over to make a matching hickey. Considering I had never had the courage to even touch her before, my fantasies were well on their way to becoming realities.

I traced the Z. Cavaricci imprint on her shirt one last time and, overcoming my fears, dropped my hands to her jeans. I began to slowly rub up and down on the front of her crotch. She was hot as hell and the humidity was high in that area. I moved lower with my rubbing and increased the pressure. Her breathing got a lot harder and a lot faster. She rolled her head, leaning back to exhale a muffled, “oh, God...”

The bell rang.

I froze.

She turned around and kissed me full on the lips.

My eyes were wide open as she asked, “Again, tomorrow?”

I managed to squeak out a shaky, “sure” as she walked away out the band room’s door.

Josh shot out of the practice room (don’t worry, he wasn’t practicing) and said, “Hey, what’s up?”

I looked down. “I think I just blew goo in my shorts.”

Josh could only say, “Wow, I’m real happy for you, man.”

**The SODa Can - [ Trying to Decide ]**

“This is an ideal situation.  
Real life doesn’t treat you as well.”

-Dr. Gordon Gallup

Now what the hell am I supposed to do?

I have this problem. I am filled with desire for a woman who is three and a half hours away. I am in love with my fiancée, who lives just across town. My fiancée is in love with me and is totally emotionally attached. With her I have a future. The woman “back home” is aware that I have strong feelings for her, but most likely would like to keep me as a friend. I want it to be so much more. My fiancée is scared that she is losing me. I am scared that she lost me a long time ago. I can’t seem to give her the emotional signs of affection she wants or the commitment she needs.

The woman “back home” probably deems herself not worthy of me. (No, I’m not trying to be arrogant, but everybody says that they’re not worthy once they get to know me.) My fiancée always asks what it is that keeps me with her (“What do I have to offer? What do you see in me? Do you love me? As much as I love you?”). The woman back home is oblivious to me and my intentions. She probably thinks that I have a stable life and a good future with my fiancée.

Why me?

Why is it that I can't show the woman I love the love she needs to feel? And why have I now fallen in love with a woman I cannot conceivably ever have?

I cannot remain true to my fiancée if I think and dream of being in another's arms. I could not remain true to the woman back home because if I would break up with my fiancée, for Chrissake, to go out with an (almost) impossible dream— What about commitment? Could my “I'll love you forever” really mean anything in her eyes? If I'd drop everything I had for a woman who just wants me as a friend, how much would my love be worth?

Cat's Cradle? Murphy's law? How about Catch-22?

How can I choose,  
when either way I lose?

***Chapter 2: After the Dance***

***The SODa Can - [ A Realization, Pt.1 ]***

“Boy, a social life [to me] truly is a spectator sport.”

- Steven A Kirkland (at the dance)

Everything worked out fine.

After some intense discussion, I finally spilled my guts to my fiancée about my feelings for the woman back home.

I cried.

She questioned.

I answered.

While sitting on the bleachers of the Bloomfield High School gym, a thought eeked its way through my head. I had been waiting for that thought since early in March. It explained everything I needed to know about why I had done everything I had to get close to the woman back home.

**“I just want to fall in love again.”**



**The SODa Can - [ A Realization, Pt.2 ]**

“You take a mortal man  
and you put him in control.  
Watch him become a god,  
watch the people’s heads ‘a roll.”  
- Megadeth

Someone once said, “Ya’ know, I think Dawn is just a fill-in for Tammy. Tammy is an hour away and Dawn is right here, everyday.” That really hurt, because at that time it might have been true. I’m not saying that they looked exactly the same or that their attitudes were even remotely close to the other’s, but from the slim pickings of Bloomfield (it’s either taken or you don’t want it) women, Dawn makes a pretty close match.

Don’t get me wrong, I’m not just remaking Dawn in Tammy’s image by a long ways. The physical similarities (?) may have made me take notice of her before, but it’s her attitudes and personality that grabbed me by the emotional balls. She is so unique. She knows what to say. And *dammit!*, she’s a hell of a lot farther out of reach than Tammy ever was or is— how can people say that she’s a “replacement”? or that she’s an easy score? or think that I believe she is one?

(Yes, I’m on the male equivalent of the rag.)

**The SODa Can - [ A Realization, Pt.3 ]**

“For a good fuck call Steve at 436-9347.”

- found written on a desk in Love Library (Room 104)

“Tell me what it takes to let you go.

Tell me where the pain is supposed to go.

And tell me how it is that you can sleep,

in the night,

Without thinking you’ve lost

Everything in your life

To a single toss of the dice.”

- Aerosmith

When I woke up the other morning to a knocking on my door, I was in no way prepared for a visit by none other than Jenny and Bob. I was given back a preliminary copy of this same story (just Chapter 1) that had apparently made the rounds and had raised eyebrows among “my women” back home.

Of course (sarcastically typed) they all understood what I meant when I wrote the first chapter. Unfortunately, I think that they believe that they know me better (emotional attitude-wise) than they really do, so I’ve tried to dispel rumors and quench some attitudes that have arisen by explaining things in Chapter 2.

I’ve come to the conclusion that the second chapter will not be included in the final book, or at least not where it was written at (*i.e.* it might be Chapter 13 or an Appendix, but not Chapter 2). This might seem confusing and damn misleading to just about everyone, but I’m going to dive into Chapter 3 right where Chapter 1 left off.

Yeah, I think that I'm gonna get real friendly and eventually seduce Dawn. I'm planning on having a way of conveniently getting Tammy out of the picture without providing too much emotional stress on me. (I don't want Dawn as a pity fuck, at least not in a story.) What prince will Tammy be whisked away by? How can I pull it off? Wait and find out.

*Will Dawn fall in love with me?*

This is just a story, real life doesn't treat you as well. (As already quoted.) Sure, I would love to have a situation in which Dawn would be in love with me and I could be with her without hurting Tammy. But that just won't happen. I am happily content to remain with Tammy, whom I do truly love, and keep Dawn as a close friend— because that is the best for all those involved. I'm not going to let people get hurt just because I'm in love with two women who won't share.

But in this story, some morning (like after Prom if I can make it last) Dawn is going to roll over in bed, pull the sheets up to her chin, look over at my sleeping body and think to herself...

“Oh my God. I actually slept with him...”

**Chapter 3: The Dance**  
***An Interlude***

**The SODa Can - [ A Slow Dance ]**

“Love... is forever.”

- Bryan Adams

*Our bodies were locked close as we swayed to the music...*

“Do you wish to dance?”

“Sure,” she replied, twirling around thereby whipping her long brown hair inches away from my face. I grabbed around her waist before she could get out on the dance floor and pulled her back to me. I whispered, “I love you” into her right ear as I tickled her belly-button from over her shirt.

Somehow she hooked her feet around my ankles, then pointed her toes up. As in any situation like this, when you lose complete control of your feet with a woman leaning on you, once you begin to topple backwards, you fall...

...**crunch** ...right into the bleachers.

She cried, “Whee!”

I started flailing around with my arms waving and legs flopping and banging on the bleachers. By this time we had drawn a lot of attention (even the DJ was looking at us while he was switching tapes in the machine) and in the ensuing silence I yelled, “I’m sexually frustrated!”

The sponsors got sour looks on their faces but everyone else got a kick out of it as she grabbed my hand and pulled me to the dance floor as Bryan Adams’ voice floated from the speakers...

**“Love... is forever.”**

## *Chapter 4: Play*

### **The SODa Can - [ Do You Trust Me? Pt.2 ]**

“Virginity can be cured.”

- Anonymous

I slowly started to back her up towards her bed. I told her to sit, she would not fall. She carefully sat down on the edge of her bed as I walked over and turned out the lights. Her parents weren't going to be home for at least three hours, so we both knew that whatever happened next would be between us and us alone.

I walked back to her and stood just inches in front of her. She leaned forward and started to wrap her arms around me, only succeeding in misjudging the distance between us and laying her face right onto my friendly appendage. I said, “Yeeikes.” She sat there for just a little bit, then looked up at me. “Did I just put my face where I think I did?”

I reached out and started stroking her long, soft hair. “Uh-huh.”

She pulled back and unwrapped her arms from around my upper legs. “Oh, geez. I'm sorry,” she apologized.

“That's okay, you couldn't see and didn't know.”

She managed to smile (there was a full moon, the curtains were wide open, and I have great night vision) and I pressed my finger to her lips. “Shhh,” I said, “lay down.”

She took a deep breath and laid back on the bed, with her arms out for a big stretch. “OK,” she said, “go on.”

**The SODa Can - [ Melancholy ]**

“Definition of ‘Melancholy’: the feeling you get when the piss is just starting to soak into your Cheerios.”

- Response to Clay’s inquiry of my connotation of ‘Melancholy’.

It’s never going to happen. She probably doesn’t even like me since I’ve put her in this situation. Why do I feel the way I do for her? Does she even take me seriously? Could she possibly ever want me? love me?

God! So many questions and so many worries.

I think I really screwed this one up when I started being open with my fiancée, yet still so damn shy around the woman back home. My fiancée already ran the gauntlet and knows where I stand in her eyes, I just need to give her my decision on which woman I am going to choose. The woman back home only recently became aware that I just might be serious when I tell her that I have strong feelings for her. Up until now I have kept my desires secret, thinking that it was for the best, feeling that I was cheating both them and myself.

I thought it was best to just write about the woman back home and vent my feelings, frustrations, and desires, instead of actively pursuing her. The problems began to arise when my fiancée noticed that I wanted to be with another woman, and I seemed to be in love with that other woman.

So I dream about her. What’s wrong with that?

My fiancée told me that if “something” had happened or would happen between me and the woman back home (*Wow! If I could be so lucky.*), she would be forced to leave me. There would be no forgiveness for my wanderings. But the problem is that **nothing** happened. I just wanted it to— and therein lies the problem. If I did wrong (and why is it considered wrong if I think it would be right?), this would be a clear-cut case, but I just *want* to do things and be with the other woman. My fiancée thinks she must be doing something to drive me away if I am thinking about being with someone else.

Arrrg.

Why can't I explain to them that they are both right and that I want to be with them both? It's not a matter of “who do you love the most?”, it's a matter of “who do you love?”

Is that too hard a concept?

-----

Thus ends ***The Seduction Of Dawn Crosley***.

“Sometimes friendships end when love is professed, and though this was later to be the case, I refuse to feel sorry for how I felt, just for what happened. I still love Dawn.

I regret that in telling her how I felt she was hurt, but I just didn't know what else to say.”

**Chapter ??: A Third Person Perspective**

**The *SODa* Can - [ The Final Chapter *or* The Last Swallow ]**

“If only for a moment, hold on to the dreams that we had.”  
- Winger (Miles Away)

“She stares at the sky, wondering why the night  
isn’t telling her, ‘believe him’. If he could only read to her  
the pages of his heart, she could see they feel the same.”  
- Winger (Under One Condition)

The summer had passed quickly for these two young friends who were fast becoming more than friends. She was eighteen and he had turned nineteen two months prior. She was in the blossom of youth, he at the crossroads of adulthood. They were both ready for this night, their last night together, for the next week brought on their departures for different colleges. Emotions and expectations had been building for these last few months, as feelings were expressed and secrets were shared— bonding their lives through shared experiences.

The clock chimed nine o’clock and they decided that it was time to leave her house. After a short drive to town in which small talk was the topic of discussion, the couple stopped at the local quick stop, Mr. B’s, for a six-pack of Dew and a tank of gas.

The couple continued to cruise Bloomfield for the next two hours, occasionally stopping to talk with other people out cruising and friends who were on their way to the dance in Hartington. The talk revolved around high school— the normal gossip of nazi teachers and current dating liaisons. The midnight hour approached and he suggested that they go to the Edge of Heaven, a drinking party location nowadays, but back then it was peaceful on the weekends and provided more than enough couples the privacy to become lovers.



She agreed.

The Edge of Heaven provided a stunning view of about a hundred square miles of Nebraska. Hiding off from a minimum maintenance road that epitomized the word minimum, it also offered a sense of perspective. The lights seemed so far off, yet the one you were with was right there next to you. With this in mind the couple, now standing quite close together, turned to one another and kissed.

He walked to the trunk of the car and returned with a blanket. Together, they laid the blanket out on the freshly cut hay stalks. The tiny stalks gave way at the slightest push, relinquishing a padded place of rest once they had sat down. They kissed once more, this time longer and more passionately than the last. His hands caressed her hair as they stared into each other's eyes.

“I love you,” he whispered.

“I love you, too,” she whispered back.

He began to massage the back of her neck and they continued kissing. She laid down on the blanket and he laid next to her. He wrapped his arms around her and held her tight as they drifted off into sleep...

## A Tension Span

She awoke six hours later to a sun that had already taken well into the sky. He was still lying next to her, but was awake and had been for most of the night.

“You didn’t...” she looked down and saw that nothing had changed. “We didn’t... ?” she said as she rolled over towards him.

“Of course not,” he replied. “I didn’t want to wake you or take advantage of you. I just wanted to wake up with you in my arms, knowing that you love me as much as I love you.”

She began to cry and threw her arms around him. She had never before found someone who cared so much for her and her feelings. They held each other and kissed until she decided that coming home at noon wouldn’t go over very well with her parents.

He picked the blanket up off the ground and tossed it back into the trunk. They took in one last view and left the Edge of Heaven as they had come— as close friends. This night had taught him that sometimes love is looking out for the other instead of yourself, and she had learned how to trust again.

This was their last night together, and as that summer faded into memories, their paths etched out into separate ways. Even though they had their chance at becoming lovers, they remained friends.

And it is up to you to believe that it was better that way.

7:52.53 A.M.

April 23, 1993

The scene opens in a small, multi-denominational church. The people sit on the hard, impersonal folding chairs with the air of sadness. The pastor drones on about the lives, the meanings, the past, and the Word. His apathetic audience is still dealing with the shock of the loss. A snuffle is heard in the front of the room; a restrained cough from the back. The pastor's eulogy comes to an end and his tearful eyes come to rest upon the open coffin.

The coffin lies empty, for it is **THE DREAM** that has died.

But that is okay,  
For a new day is dawning.  
A day in which man is equal  
    yet unique in himself.  
A day in which life means happiness  
    not more pain.  
A day in which love means share  
    instead of take...

Here's to friendship and missed chances,  
    caring and hope,  
    the future,  
and to *the dream*,  
for *the dream* can **never** die—  
    *only get better as time goes by...*

## A Tension Span

The colors blurred...

the white, white light met the dark, dark night  
and a grayness settled upon the lands.

People looked up at the gray, gray skies  
and wondered where the sun had gone.

the lonely pot of gold, with its lovely rainbow stole',  
remained lost from sight in the gray.

The bluebirds lost their color and the red robins lost theirs, too;  
both looking quite similar in this gray, gray world.

the sun didn't shine and the rain didn't fall.

the seasons wouldn't, *couldn't* change,

and the grayness tumbled on...

---

*Then in the mourning came the reign.* A kazoo that blue and a friend of few, I awoke to your eyes and questioned your lies. For some I ask not, for I know of your pogo, but I can question your desires, for your fly is not the only thing that is down.

A caress of your mind leads to your toil as I supplant the voices that recommend your turmoil. I push away doubt as I plunder your desires, I steal away your heart to fill it with what transpires. You squeal at the feel and trip at the nana's wrath, flailing like hell on a once golden path. The threads of time have tangled once again, bringing you to a halt in the wallowings of sin.

**Displaced in this world of blistering hate, I ask once again,**

*"Do you think it's too late?"*

**A swim in Quiddity, euphoric as a time in the womb, I ask once again,**

*"Do you think this is my tomb?"*

Your vices are numerous, your vices shove toothpicks beneath my tender skin. *You laugh, you're in heat. You win and I'm beat.* But as the quicksands of your own dreams begin to pull you under, your nightmarish hells push you deep.

**INTO ME.**

The forest has eyes that look deep, and the wind blows cold through your soul. Bear the burden and weep for the damned. Weep, and suffer... so cold. So cold.

In the night, your inner demons demand attention and your innocence cries. You fear the darkness and what it entails. The whispers drag on you.

*What is fault? And why is it yours?*

You never asked for those... beasts... to enter your mind as they entered your body. Emotions torn to shreds as your innocence fled. Away you ran but you cannot run from yourself or the memories you make yourself relive every day and every night and every time you cry.

Do you fear them?

Do you fear them?

What does it mean when you say you cannot tell me?

Do you fear them?

What should I do?

Rumor has it that you've got it bad. You aren't faring well in this battle 'cause you're only fighting yourself. Nobody is winning and you can't afford to lose this one.

Sometimes it takes a single soul to chase away one's demons. Once I heard a story of a thousand that met a force of seven. Those seven emerged victorious because they had one thing their opponents lacked: A bond of friendship. This bond was strengthened by feelings of love and togetherness, things that *cannot* be broken by those who cannot feel those feelings, things that *will not* be broken by those who cannot feel.

*“Suck my what?”*

I was decked out in my scenic wino-wear surveillance outfit, seated hunched over at the end of the fourth floor hall of Schramm Hall. A bottle of Jack Daniels peeked out of the paper bag in my hand. My blood shot eyes scanned the hallway as my watch beeped two o'clock A.M. A Domino's pizza delivery person sauntered down the hall with a large pizza under his arm. He knocked on the door numbered 401.

The door swung open to reveal Ed, the protagonist in this tragedy called human existence. “Where the hell have you been?” he grumbled, pissed off at the world and tired of waiting for the pizza ordered over an hour ago.

The meek delivery peon could only squeak out, “I'm only the delivery person. That'll be \$6.18.”

Ed let loose a bellar when the geek wouldn't even take coupons, but still grudgingly handed over the cash. The delivery fag dove for the elevator, scared as hell that Ed was as pissed as he sounded. Ed slammed his door on the empty hall.

Empty, that is, except for me.

I chuckled aloud, reminiscing about almost getting run over by the UNL E-Z Ride this morning. It wouldn't have bothered me so much if I hadn't have been so constipated that I could barely breathe and was looking forward to multiple hours on the hopper. It took me by surprise when I heard squealing brakes and a thunder of applause from bystanders. For some odd reason, crossing a street when it says “DON'T WALK” in a steady (not flashing) bright red is a great rush for UNL students across the nation and around the world— or at least on campus and especially at 14th and Vine.

I looked up at the announcement board behind me. There was some bullshit about Hooked On Phonics, old carpets, last year's books, crappy cars and roommates wanted. Howcum nobody wants a maniacal bastard like me as a roommate? I was ticked because they wouldn't let me have a room in Sandoz. Just because I have this moderately large hunk of flesh between my legs that says, "Don't let me loose in a women-only dorm" is no reason to keep me out. I thought there wasn't any sexual discrimination on this campus.

I withdrew my trusty retractable black fine point Pilot pen and pulled down an ad for a used '83 Subaru and went to work writing on the back of it. "For a lousy lay call 465-2698 and ask for 'Poopy Pants' but for a most excellent, full body tingling, multiple orgasmic fuckfest, call 436-8209 and ask for Steve." Feeling really good about my overly large genitalia, I wrote "A Fuck-N-A Production" at the bottom and retaped it to the announcement board.

A chink bitch walked down the hall with an EastPak backpack slung over her shoulder and a six pack of Dew in her hands. I thought to myself, "Some people would get mugged for a six pack of Dew. Hell, I'd even mug someone for a six pack of Dew."

I stood up and grabbed the chink bitch by the back of her neck and shoved her to the floor. She skinned up her left knee and her backpack thudded on the floor. She cried "Oh!" and rolled over to face me. I scrambled and picked up the Dew. The chink bitch looked at me with pleading eyes and held out her arms. "OK, take me. You can have me. Be gentle and I won't scream. Or be rough and make me need to in ECSTASY!" Her voice had been getting steadily louder and wilder and more excited. She was starting to breathe heavily and her chest was heaving.

...

## A Tension Span

“Don’t be such a penis.”

I looked up from bangin’ away on the chink bitch, slapped her flat tits one last time and pulled out. Her eyes rolled as all 22 inches popped into reverse for the last time. There was a popping sound as the vaginal vacuum (caused by the Dude backing out) met the open air. I stood up and shook hands with Mr. Jason Fricke, self-styled “Stud Extraordinaire.” I asked him if he could use some chink and he unzipped his fly even faster than I usually can.

Jason dove for the chink’s bush-turned-rain forest. He pumped like hell for a couple of minutes as I air-drummed to Pearl Jam and the chink bitch rolled her eyes and drummed her fingers impatiently on the floor waiting for Jason to get done. He gave one last moan and shot a little wad into the chink bitch. She pushed him off her and started looking for her panties. (They were in my back pocket– a guy’s gotta collect something, don’t he?)

I mumbled something to Jason along the lines of, “Clay has pizza in 401”. (Actually I said, “Hey homeboy! Be shakin’ your honkey white ass on down to Ed’s shithole, the big fuck just had a Domino Delivery and I be thinkin’ he needs a little help yous can give on makin’ dat dere pizza disappear.”)

Jason said, “Ahhhh, Yehzz, pizza,” as only he can, shook my hand like a greedy politician and headed down the hall saying, “Drummers Rule.” There was a pause.

“Except Freshmen. Hahr, hahr, hahr.”

What a fuck.

...



On the way back to Abel Hall, my most humble abode, I followed this chick with the juiciest ass I'd seen in a long time. I was hypnotized by the swish in her hot tail as she did her strut down the side walk. I couldn't resist myself so I tapped her on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me miss, but can I fuck you?" She slapped me and called me a pig.

I grabbed the chick by the middle of her bra and gave a huge pull, then let go. The cups whapped into her breasts and she just stood and stared at me.

She dove at my belt as I grabbed the top of her shirt. She yanked the belt off as I was unbuttoning her shirt. She pulled my shirt wide to reveal Dude, hovering his head between my pecs, as I was still unbuttoning that fucking shirt. She said, "Oh my God" accenting each word. I gave up on unbuttoning and just yanked her shirt out of her shorts. She unbuttoned her shorts and they dropped clear to her ankles, where she kicked them off. She wasn't wearing any panties.

I dove in.

Dude slid far enough in that she came to a halt with her firm tits right in my face. (A startlingly weird, but true, phenomenon.) I went to work sucking those erect nipples. I wrapped my arms around her and grabbed double handfuls of college female butt. She squealed and I whipped around and deposited her on top of a dark green Fiero 2m6 SE. I started pumping up and down with my arms, splitting that pussy wide with the Dude. And to think I always hated doing curls in weight lifting.

## A Tension Span

The chick's ankles dug into my back and she cried for more. I thought to myself, "*more?*" so I grabbed her shoulders and pushed her down hard on Dude. She screamed and shot cum juices all over the passenger window of the Fiero. I thought I killed her, but I think she was just in love. I lifted her off Dude because my arms were getting sore from lifting her. She stood there drooling, looking with awe at Dude. Oh well, so much for hood hockey with the flesh puck. Now how in the hell am I gonna add to my panty collection since she wasn't wearing any?

...

Sarah (da chick), bare-ass and buck naked (except for her socks) hopped on my back. I threw her clothes in her backpack and slung it over my shoulder. She pointed the way back to her dorm room and told me she was a little chilled. I hauled ass back to Sandoz and she hopped off just outside the door. Two black chicks pointed at her and said, "Hey girlfriend, get some clothes on. It's cold out here." Sarah rolled her eyes and escorted me to the elevator.

We got in the elevator and she pulled open my shirt once again. She said "Oh my God" one last time and grabbed Dude with both hands. I flexed and she fainted. The elevator door opened so I picked Sarah up and slung her over my shoulder.

I walked down the halls searching for a door with a sign on it saying "Sarah's Room" and finally found it at 525. I opened up her bookbag and fished around in her shorts until I found her key. I unlocked the door and walked in on her roommate changing for her evening workout. I saw those bare nipples and said, "Gimme gimme gimme."

She said, "What did you do to Sarah?"

I responded by tossing Sarah down on her bed and pulling open my shirt. Sarah's roommate gulped and said, "Is that for real? And if so, can I have it, too?"

I walked over to Sarah's roommate and pulled down her shorts to her knees. I grabbed at her crotch that suddenly seemed to have come alive. It was wet already and she was starting to get a wide-on. (Defn: wide-on: the state of the vaginal orifice during an excited state in which the labius majora and labius minora -the outer and inner pussy lips, respectively- spread wider in anticipation of the impending insertion of a penis.) I squeezed her clit and she had an orgasm right there.

Sarah's roommate took no time in getting undressed, she just yanked down her panties and attempted to hop on. I told her it had been a long night, so I gently turned her around and bent her over the big sofa in the middle of their room. I thought to myself, "What the hell, it is Wednesday after all. Why do you think they call it hump day?"

...

*Sleep.*

As consciousness wanes, my will reigns on this shell of dust you call your body. Your mind in its toil slips deep into my soul as your thoughts wink out in flights of fancy, soaring high into your dreams and out into the night. Erogenous lies and carnal ties never succeed in binding **mind and body** or *thoughts and flesh*. Your mind is my playground, your body— my toy. I ask you now, isn't saying "no" just a ploy?

Can you shrug off my charm with a bat of your eyes?

Can you push me away, knowing I have been inside?

Can you say that you don't **want to** after just getting a glimpse?

Can you say that you don't **need to** after feeling my kiss?

How can you say that it scares you when it is all that you want to do? You **want to** surrender, but you've only been taught to fight. *You look at me, and I into you.*

*You want to see me, I want you, too.*

**I started Pushing.**

Thoughts collide in a jumbled mess as I swim into your mind. Wafting serenely into your emotions held so tight, so guarded, so feared, so easily haunting to those I hold dear. **You seek the hand to guide you and the grip to keep you. I provide the foundation for your towering dreams, never shifting to let you loose at the seams. Ahh, sweet sanity... my friend, my fuck,** my knock upon the door that leads deeper down, **into you, into me**— separated by only a span of air and preconceived notions.

Letting loose you fall to my side, I would lift you up, but *you're my ride*. Together we climb, together we climb, together we reach that top, but never stop climbing.

The night hides what I feel, but the night always turns to day, and from you I hide only your fears and your foes, knowing they hurt you. I stand alert, guarding your innocent smile, watching.

watching...

## **Lost Touch**

They found my friend just the other day  
    lyin' on the bank of the creek that runs through town.  
They say it's a cryin' shame...  
    to die so young... to die so in vain.  
They told me he ended his life  
    with a bullet to his head.  
But when they judged this book by its cover...  
    they missed out on the story hidden within.

Now it's too late to wonder  
    what went through his head and mine.  
I guess that true friends wonder  
    about the passing of the time.  
But when that summer rolled around  
    in that eighteenth year of my life  
I could see where my friend was coming from...  
    and I cried, thinking he was right.

**That Damn Penny**

I was walking along the street, I guess it was some time ago.  
I looked down at the gutters and prayed to the Lord  
to never make them my home.

I came upon a quarter and dime  
laying on the edge of the sidewalk,  
looking like they were trying to escape into the grass.  
I picked up the quarter and left the dime, and prayed to the Lord  
to never let the day come  
that I'd need to pick up a dime.

That quarter bought my girlfriend a gumball.  
She smiled and kissed me.

At a much later time, when times were a little tighter,  
I happened upon the remains of someone's parking meter offering—  
stamped into the dirt were a dime and a nickel.  
I picked up the dime and left the nickel, and prayed to the Lord  
to never let the day come  
that I'd need to pick up a nickel.

That dime bought me half an hour on that meter—  
time to see my girlfriend that afternoon.  
She smiled and kissed me.

Some time later, when the newsman told me times were hard,  
I spied a nickel and a penny underneath a park bench.  
I picked up the nickel and left the penny, and prayed to the Lord  
to never let the day come  
that I'd need to pick up a penny.

That nickel bought my girlfriend a mint.  
She smiled and kissed me.

This morning I saw a penny lying in the street  
next to a newspaper proclaiming: "Economic Slump Continues".  
I picked up the penny, and remembered so long ago  
when I would have never dreamed of picking one up,  
and prayed to the Lord for my girlfriend to come back.

Because that damn penny can't buy anything.  
It can't bring back my girlfriend and her sweet kisses.  
It can't bring back my happiness.  
It can't buy me food to get rid of my hunger.  
And it can't get me out of this damn street gutter I call home.

*the light shone down on the man reading,*

“they came seeking enlightenment.” yes, he chuckled aloud, they still sought him out. even after all these years he was never left alone.

the antichrist— the name not entirely fitting, for when he met the face of jesus there was no upheaval, no cosmic cataclysm, and no end. when the lamb opened the seventh seal, the ensuing silence was interrupted by a tiny, whispering voice that chilled to the bone.

FIND YOURSELF.

*but tho his eyes rest upon the page, his mind is elsewhere.*

and all was dark.

*time has not been kind to him, as his wrinkled hands*

the book was propaganda, a guise by the kings, a lever for the clergy. those of wisdom played not the games of religion, for games of belief are not games. those of the faith sought to expand their beliefs, unaware of their fallacies.

the god of man commanded man to kill man.

and so it came to pass that rulers were proclaimed the hand of god. personal gain and power hunger drove the hand to clench into a fist, and the wars began.

*turned yet another page...*

the words were misleading, sometimes even complete lies. there were treasures that needed to stay buried, tombs to remain unopened, and skeletons to remain in the shadows. the stories would remain unwritten, but would still be whispered in the night’s chilly air.



*he exhaled raspily, then coughed*

the second calling.

*blood. yes, it is almost time.*

the papyrus crumbled in time. translators were not to be trusted as each new king made changes in the past to suit their present.. the clergy could be bought, or hailed as being a possessed host and excommunicated— if history’s writings were not “enlightened” to the role of the king’s lineage in events. [king] james covered the signs, the clergy covered the story, the calling went unheard.

*the door behind him opens.*

until now.

**Forever Darkness**

5-17-93 / 7:42.26 p.m.

When will I ever see the sun?

The bony fingers of Death choke me,  
dragging me down into dirt.

Lightning flashes in the sky.

Body ready for to die.

Ashes on the wind fly...

Then the fabled tunnel appears  
and at its end is light...

from the flames of hell.

**Forever darkness**

**Surrounding 'round me**

**Forever darkness**

**Wishing I could feel**

**Forever darkness**

**My spine is broken..**

**..cannot move**

**I am blind..**

**..and so are you.**

Losing battles, never fought– just lost  
Learning fear, never taught– just cringe  
Feeling pain, never ought– just hurt  
Selling dreams, never bought– just sold  
Fleeing death, never caught– just damned  
Crying tears, never sought– just...

In my head, in my bed– it's you.

You push me out

**I shove back in**

*never sin, you'll never win, let me in.*

Open up, pull me in.

*In deep you'll always lose.*

*Even if I never win.*

I thought I died and went to hell,  
but I'm still alive, or at least for right now.  
I may never see the Pearly Gates  
for my heart is black as stone,  
but I know that when I die–  
I will not die alone.

**Forever Dark.**

**Off In The Distance**

I see, before me,  
a beautiful woman,  
with a sparkle in her eyes,  
and a fire in her soul.

She's looking,  
for a friend.  
Maybe more,  
but I'm just guessin'.  
(Hey! How could I know?)

Look at how proud she stands.  
Scanning the crowd,  
the music's so loud,  
and I hope she sees me.

And I wonder  
if she sees my stare,  
takes me up,  
and follows through with my offer.

She takes my hand  
and holds it tight.  
Make my stand.  
Time to prove I'm a man,  
as we head out to the dance floor...

I see before me  
A boy and a girl,  
no, a man and wife,  
make that a family.  
How fast time flies.  
How things change.  
Once strangers,  
once friends.  
Then together until the end.

Look, there, he looks like me,  
and she, she looks a lot like you.  
Hey baby, take my hand—  
see their kid—  
    He's got my smile,  
    and your laugh.  
He's something to look forward to  
if we can make this feeling last.

Off in the distance  
Is a bright future.  
A starry night  
and lots of love  
    'tween you and me.

And I know we can make it last.  
Take my hand.  
Hold me tight.

Now kiss me.

**Checkmate**

In your dreams, when you run to the edge and jump over,  
is the sky shining? or is it a nauseating dark?

Do you take to the air and fly? or just fall down and die?

When the wind blows, do you feel the chill?

Do you hide when you are scared, or flee when you sense fear?

When the day descends to night, do goose bumps rule your skin?

Do your eyes dart towards movements?

**Does the sound of your own heartbeat deafen you?**

Do you hear me?

Do you cower?

Do you fear?

*Come, young one, your end is near.*

Take my hand and close your eyes,

Your nightmares run free as your wishes die.

Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! Wake up!

A death in dreams, a death in life—

I ask for your hopes as I crush you in strife.

Everything you hold dear are my pawns, with you my losing foe.

When your walls come crumbling down, who do you turn to

when you question your allies and fear your friends?

**Check and mate, *I seal your fate.***

## **5 Blank Pages**

8-11-93

9:42.21 A.M.

Five blank pages and a wasted heart.

    Glassy stares, or averted eyes.

I thought friends wouldn't grow apart.

I wonder sometimes who cries.

Five blank pages and an empty heart.

    Times they change, for me and you.

I thought friends shouldn't grow apart.

I wonder sometimes who knew.

Five blank pages and a broken heart.

    After all the thoughts we shared.

I thought friends couldn't grow apart.

I wonder sometimes who cared,

    about five blank pages

    and this heart of mine.

**Still here**

Ahh, sanity... a feint at a scary thought. Back again, I presume? Haven't you learned to quit while you're ahead? You butt in at my indiscretion, seek my confessions, plead your case and bleed your festering wounds all at my expense. You ask and you wine, you beg and you bother me.

**Go away.**

**Still here?** Good. You fuck. You fucking waste.

**Still here?** You know you are worthless.

**Still here?** Can't you see you aren't worth it?

Still here? Why doesn't anyone like you?

Still here? Why don't you like yourself?

Still here? Why are you so hated?

Still here? **Why are you so fucking stupid?**

**Still here? Still banging your head?**

Still here? Grow the fuck up!

Still here? Stay where you belong.

Still here? Don't flinch when I beat you.

**Still here? And you wonder why you cry?**

**Still here? And you don't know why?!?**

**Still here?** I used to know why the butterflies flew in the winds and the sun came up every morning. **Everything flutters and everything flies, if they try hard enough.** Come along, I believe in you, if not you never would have made it this far. Are you satisfied, after seeing me soar? **Are you satisfied, after looking at your shoes, and I, at the air beneath my feet?** I've already done much more than just shake your hand, this outstretched hand is here to lift you up.



Don't cry.

It's happy on the inside. *As you will be.* Don't be afraid, I have you. Don't worry about all that you've left behind— nothing changes when you can look down at the world going by. There you go, that's the way. *What?* **Resistance?**

The reassuring squeeze turns to a painful grip as I rip your arm out of its socket.

You scream as you fall to the ground, having just barely gotten the feeling of leaving it.

I plant my foot upon the back of your head.

“You're not ready. You fucking bastard!”

You wept at your failure to fly as your life faded.

I coddle your corpse, pissed at having lost a friend.

But you're dead, so what the fuck.

Lonely

5-11-93

9:28.16 p.m.

Loneliness.

How I hate the word.

A far cry from happiness, a next door neighbor to hell—  
it grips on your soul and drags you so far down.

Once you are alone you are hollow.

You are hollow on the inside and that hurts.

The worst fear is a fear of loneliness, for all else can be overcome.

When you are totally alone even an enemy can seem like a friend,  
and most oftentimes you are led like a lamb to the slaughter  
with other people's wishes.

Just trying to get along.

Just trying for a friend.

Companionship— now that's a dream to someone who's lonely.

Lonely people don't have the people to look out for them.

To care for them.

To love them.

And even if those people are out there, a lonely person doesn't know it.

And that lonely person cries.

That lonely person cries tears of pain

that only another person who's been lonely can understand.

Tears don't mean a lot to some people, but to a lonely person it's all they've got.

When you reach the bottom and have nothing left, that's when you have yourself.

Some prize.

It isn't easy being lonely.

The world is within your reach but no one is within your grasp.

Other people look so damn happy when you're alone.

Sometimes I wonder what it's like.

It scares me, that much I know.

But I don't want to be lonely.

## A Tension Span

*Immortality*— the dying art of the dying arts. Boredom and impracticality— you smell like the dead. Not to annoy or degrade or dispose, but away with you now. I'm painting the world colorful with Crayons multi colored. *Your penis dying.*

Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha. Ha.

*I'm laughing at your pain again— you know it's my biggest thrill. I steal your heat and feel your heart. I hold you tight, but still want to fart. This day has grown long, and I wish I could slip into slumber as easily as serpent's fangs dive into flesh.* It's the stupid things in life that one remembers.

And I...

I...

I.. I...

**I remember it all, now.**

### **Surprise.**

Sanity is more than just the dream I had imagined it to be. Sometime I will look back on these episodic outbursts and laugh. Maybe cry. Maybe wonder at what went through my head and revel in the feelings that were stirred up in me.

This asylum, this mind of mine.

I looked around and saw that no one had even noticed it had been going on. No one could see what I had experienced. I laughed a little, knowing that they wouldn't have understood it either. I got up and walked across the room, ending up standing before a mirror on the wall. I saw my true face reflected— those eyes... mine— no flames smoldering within and no tortured soul trapped on the other side.

I looked back and saw my disciples, no longer demi-gods in training, but people.

Friends.

I whispered, “Ha, Ha, Ha. You poor bastards.”

They all looked up. Some of them nodded, knowing that it was over and showing that they were more perceptive than I had given them credit for. I could see that separate pasts were going to once again set out upon separate paths. I just started to cry, then everyone in this circle: first three, then six, then ten— came over to me for the last time. We all said our good-byes, knowing we would never be the same,

nor together,

ever again...

## **The End**

June 30, 1993 6:04.43 P.M.

*knock. knock. knock.*

“Can I come in?”

[silence]

“I’m sorry.”

[silence]

“I know you’re in there. You turned the lights off  
as I drove up, so will you at least talk to me?”

[silence]

“Please?”

[silence]

“I didn’t mean for things to turn out the way  
they did. I came here to apologize, but I’d  
really like to talk with you about it.”

[silence]

“Can’t you see that this is hard for me to do?  
What did I do that hurt you so much?”

[silence]

“Answer me!”

[silence]

“Oh, God. I’m sorry I blew up at you like that.  
I just need to hear your voice. Tell me I’m wrong.  
Call me an asshole. Just talk to me.”

[silence]

“Talk to me. Anything would be better than this.”

[silence]

“I’m sorry.” Sobbing, as I fell to the ground,  
huddling against the door.

“I’m so, so sorry.”

[silence]

I hear you crying, leaning against the door.

The door that remains closed.

## The Day I Died

“There he goes!”

I looked back over my shoulder and saw Trav pointing out the window of Shawn’s car at me. Shawn slammed on the brakes and whipped the steering wheel to the right, barely making the corner. I dove into the tall grass alongside Bazile Creek and threw up for the third time. My throat was burning. I was feeling a little woozy, and two of my best friends were trying like hell to stop me from killing myself.

My stomach rolled again as Trav barreled out of Shawn’s still-moving car. Mr. Jason Fricke came running from the other direction (he’d taken the foot bridge), effectively trapping me. I took a swig from the bottle of Dew in my hand, washed my mouth out as best as I could, then spit the last of that foul taste out of my mouth.

I stood up and made a show of wiping grass off of me as Shawn and Trav manhandled me into the back seat of Shawn’s green station wagon amidst the barrage of:

“*What are you doing?*” “People are really worried about you.”  
“*It’s not worth it, man.*” “I’m real sorry.” and “*We’re just trying to help you.*”

“Just trying to help?” I asked. “Help me do what?”

---

The morning had been uneventful, just one more District Cross Country meet, this time at Bloomfield and this year I competed as a Junior. Things hadn’t been going the greatest between me and Ardis for the last three months or so. We still talked, we were still going out, but we just weren’t getting that loving feeling.

---

## A Tension Span

The race was amazing. The 3.1 mile Bloomfield course was flat, the weather was cool with a nice breeze that whistled past your ears when you ran, and the Bloomfield Bees had the home course advantage. Since almost all of the Cross Country team members were in band, Mr. N. drug the band out to the Country Club for the first pep band performance at a Cross Country meet in recorded history. The Cheerleaders even managed to have the school spirit to cheer for a sport that wasn't Football, Basketball, or Volleyball. I barely missed qualifying for State individually, but the more amazing feat was our team effort. Mr. Jason Fricke, Shawn, Schroed, and I managed to keep our team's three-year winning streak going, allowing Wilke to thrill us and chill us with yet another trip to Kearney for the State meet.

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Before the party at Shawn's house, Mr. Jason Fricke and I cruised town and talked about his life. He was so bummed out about how he was and his life and his whole situation with school, home, and sports. It was so bad that we wound up talking about suicide.

"Suicide is never the answer" I told him.

---

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"Jonathan, what's wrong?" Jenny asked.

"Everything," I replied. I took out three aspirin and popped them down like candy.

"What the hell are you doing?" Jenny demanded. I poured the bottle of aspirin into my hand, then tossed another six down the hatch. I didn't care— this was the last of the second bottle.

Everyone started moving. I was out sitting at the kitchen table talking to Jenny, but I headed for Shawn's room as soon as she stood up. Jenny walked over to the living room to Shawn and told him that she needed to talk to him—

---



“Jonathan’s got problems.” Jason was still splayed out on the floor watching the movie, but at this he jumped up. Adam came out from Shawn’s room, passing by me in the hall. Trav got up from where he and Ardis were. Ardis looked around, and I think she realized what it looked like from where I stood:

Her and Travis. Too close, too friendly.

Trav took control of the situation almost immediately. A feeling of hate rose to the surface in me, but I dismissed it. Trav had done nothing wrong. He called his mother and told her that we might have an aspirin overdose situation. She is a nurse and knows this stuff by heart because she knows that someday she’ll find Trav dying because he felt like it. She told him to keep an eye on me, call her back if anything weird started to happen, but most of all to not let me go to sleep.

Shawn took my keys. Jenny took my jacket. I sat back down in the kitchen. Ardis went and hid in Shawn’s room and wouldn’t come back to talk to me. Everyone looked worried. My stomach started hurting. I had taken a couple aspirin before the meet and a couple after, the usual dosage on a meet day. I was starting to go a little stir crazy with all of these people looking at me.

This was one of the happiest days in my life. Wasn’t it?

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After the race, the elementary kids ran around in their own meet. As role models to future runners everywhere, each team member got to run a group of kids in. After running in the First and Second grade divisions, Ardis and I had nothing to do until the awards ceremony. I looked at Ardis and took her hands. We walked around the course, silent, but holding each other and not letting go. I told her I loved her and that I wanted things between us to work. She said she loved me. She said we could work things out. We held each other until Wilke came over and told us to break it up— it was school time, after all.

## A Tension Span

We held hands and walked over to the finish line.  
That's the last time I remember holding her hands.

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After Shawn and Trav brought me back to Shawn's house, I went along with what they said. They kept an eye on me to make sure I wouldn't run off again. We waited until the movie was over, then Ralph (Shawn's Dad) drove me home. We talked the whole way home, but I don't remember what we talked about. Shawn drove my car home. It must have looked funny to my parents that the whole Cross Country team had to escort me home "just because I wasn't feeling good." They never asked and nobody ever told them differently. I stayed up that night, all through the next day, and through that next night. As the sun was coming up Sunday morning, I finally passed out. For forty hours I lived in fear of going to sleep and not getting up.

I will never forget those hours.

For the next four months I was depressed. On the rebound, I fell in love with another girl, yet continued to love Ardis. I slowly realized that Ardis and I could never make it, allowing myself to finally meet my new girlfriend with an open heart and a relatively clear conscience. This "rebound" seems to have worked, since it's almost three years later and we're getting married next summer. Ardis moved away three months after that night I tried to kill myself.

I always wanted to talk with her about that night, about us, but it never happened.

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I got up from the table and walked out the front door. Shawn wondered where in the hell I was going. I jumped down the steps and ran out into the night. I heard everyone run out, swearing, and running to chase me or getting into cars to catch me. My stomach was really starting to hurt now. I ran down the street towards the creek that runs through town as the first stomach cramp hit me. I threw up when I was almost to the foot bridge. I looked back because I could hear people coming and the sound of engines. I wiped off my mouth as I walked across the bridge.

“Yeah, suicide is never the answer,” I said to no one in particular, “but that doesn’t mean it doesn’t happen.”

9-3-93 11:48.59 P.M.

**TROJan Horse**

OBSESSION.

For as long as I can remember, I've been obsessed with sex. Laugh if you must, but the sex I lust for is the sex you cannot possibly feel— only experience. You have never felt sex, nor love for that matter, only the rush of hormones and the electrical zaps of the nerves within your brain. No, true sex eludes you. It hides from you so completely, showing wisps of itself to you on rare occasions, revealing a glimpse of the grand scheme, teasing, taunting, driving you on until the first.

Spasms race through your body. Maybe your back arches. Maybe your hands grope and grasp for something not really there. Your mouth may be dry from the heavy breathing or wet from the dripping desires you imagine. Legs locked, eyes closed, body straining, moaning, sweat, rising, rising, *oh God*

orgasm.

A simple word, a complex feeling. Distinguishing between primal and cultured, tame and wild, it drives out your thoughts of work or home, replacing them with,

what?

Can't tell me, can you? Nor can I tell you. If it could be written or explained, I wonder if it would mean as much. And why should it mean anything? Isn't it just survival of the species? Fuck and be merry?

Pursuit.

Seek and capture. Maim, hobble, restrain, ravage, retain—  
that's how it works, isn't it?

Women on the prowl, hunter and hunted. Victim? Aggressor?  
Giver? Taker?

Who gives a damn anyway?

EVERYONE WANTS TO GET LAID.

*don't they?*

Phone calls don't always get returned but the sexual romp is  
usually remembered either forever or in passing, leaving an impression  
upon some, casting a depression upon others.

Is a rape so bad?

If you have to ask, I guess so.

What happened? Who knew? Where? Why?

Why, dammit! Why did I do it?

## A Tension Span

10-1-93 12:34.18 P.M.

She wasn't my best friend.

For years I had been a nerdy hermit, content in my life as a commoner. I believed myself destined for greatness, and it was so. Then I believed myself to be challenged, and so I was. I continued on to believe that the martyred called my name to join their ranks, and so I came to them, leaving much behind.

A time passed.

I believed myself humble, and soon I achieved employment, basking in the manual labor and reveling in a lifestyle others would never choose to live. I became happy. The world still passed by, but I had achieved a sense of enlightenment, as well as a temperament able to embrace the awaiting world. The world was intrigued by this pariah before them. Smiling like a child, I stood wide-eyed, enjoying their scrutiny. The world came to enjoy my company, an experience totally surprising and foreign to a wandering loner such as I.

10-3-93 12:01.48 P.M.

I never meant to hurt anyone.

Throughout my life up until that night, I had fallen in love over and over again. I gave my heart freely, not expecting much of anything in return. Faces passed through my life and faces passed out of my life.

I cried a lot.

My heart was broken again and again as these innocent women became aware of my affections, then, frightened by my words, turned away. Why did I feel this way? Why did I keep going back for more? Why didn't any of them stay and find out how things would work out? I already had a girlfriend; I was just looking for people to be close with. Was I wrong for asking?

I must have been, for all the cold shoulders, icy stares, and turned backs I received, heralding in the end of yet another friendship.

## A Tension Span

10-4-93 11:56.17 A.M.

Who cares?

They drove off.

I was back from school, really in need of people to talk to, full of questions of what all I had missed, and lonely for the old crowd. I pulled up to Danelle's house. (Actually, I parked across the street at the First Trinity Church, mere feet from the spot I first made third base on a woman.) I sprung out of my car and headed around to the passenger side. She and Danelle were getting into her car when I had whipped in beside them. Expecting a "Hey, Jonathan!" or at least a joking, "Where tha hell ya been?" I was completely crushed when they backed up and drove off.

I stood there until they had disappeared from sight into the Bloomfield traffic.

"What the hell did I do?"

No one answered me.

I kicked my car. December 18<sup>th</sup> was not going well.



10-5-93 12:38.59 P.M.

What *is* a sock fuck?

The first time I had sex, I was completely naked. She wasn't, of course. She laid there with her eyes closed, fingers groping at the covers. Her bare chest was heaving. Her smooth stomach, now slick with perspiration, led down to that patch of hair I was presently exploring. Her legs were stretched out, one straight, one bent, and at the end of each was one of those cute bootie-socks complete with a little yellow ball on its back.

I didn't think anything about it at the time, but looking back on that night, my mind screams, "What's up with that bootie shit? Get naked, woman!" But at that time I was just happy and giddy that I was getting some, while experiencing my first, of many, sock fucks.

## A Tension Span

10-8-93 11:55.33 A.M.

Almost Valentine's Day.

The last time I talked with her it was almost Valentine's Day. It's been eight months now. It's hard to believe that the friends you know will always be there for you have only been with you a short while. I guess you could say that she and I were friends for two years, my Junior and Senior years in high school. Before that we were just acquaintances, and after that, well, I suppose you'd have to ask her.

That last time I talked to her I told her that I was looking forward to seeing the "old crowd". I juggled the stuffed dinosaur she had given me to ward off loneliness with as I laughed about old times.

Two months ago I found that orange dinosaur's neon green relative, and got it to give to her. When I took it to her house to give it to her, I was told that she had already left for college.

I was too late once again, and probably for the last time.

10-10-93 11:19.05 A.M.

Hang time.

Last year I spent a lot of time in my room. I drank a lot of Dew.  
I ate a lot of cereal.

I thought a lot.

My life slowly crumbled.

I envisioned an angel bathed in flames falling to the earth, wings broken, body blackened, his face— mine, and twisted with agony. He/I fell into a pit, bouncing off the walls, breaking his/my bones, scraping flesh from his/my hands as he/I tried in vain to slow his/my descent.

Falling, falling, *Oh, God*— the bottom!

Impact.

The pain wracked his/my senses, passing him/me in and out of consciousness. His/my body shook as he/I slowly rolled over to face the open skies, a mere pinhole of blue so far above him/me.

A low rumble begins and the floor shakes. He/I thought that he/I had hit bottom, then *we* scream as the floor falls through...

10-15-93 12:26.10 A.M.:

“Get in.”

I had my window rolled down and my gun pointed out the window. The other car was occupied by Jenny, Danelle, and Claire, Jenny’s younger sister. Jenny and Danelle were here to pick up Claire from some church bullshit, and hadn’t realized it was me pulling in beside them until it was too late.

Danelle screamed.

I pulled the trigger, sending a bullet through the windshield of Jenny’s Grand Prix, shattering it and shutting Danelle up, as well as rousing the neighbors within about four blocks. I jumped out of my car and pulled their passenger door open. I shoved the cloth I had in my other hand into Danelle’s face. She tried to pull back, but succumbed to the ether’s effects quickly because of her struggling.

I opened the back driver’s side door of my car. I pulled Danelle out of Jenny’s car and tossed her in the back of mine. I motioned to Claire to come over to me and she did. I pushed the cloth into her face and she passed out. I tossed her in on top of Danelle, then waved my pistol at Jenny.

“Don’t hurt us,” she said.

“No more than you’ve hurt me,” I replied as she walked around the front of her car to face me. I whispered, “I thought you were a friend,” as I reached up to wipe a tear from her cheek. I hadn’t even noticed that she had begun to cry. I took her in my arms and kissed her, then backed up and pushed the cloth to her face. “Nightie night.” She joined me up front, sprawled out on the passenger side. I made one last glance around to see how many people had seen me, but no one had come out yet.

I pulled out from the church parking lot, putting my Sophie B. Hawkins tape into the stereo. Her soothing voice contrasted the emotions I felt as I drove out of town.

“I’m committed now.”

\* \* \*

By the time they woke up forty minutes later, I had already whisked them away to my secret hiding place and tied them up. We were in what used to be a garage up at what I’ll refer to as “the other place”. The house was rodded out and unusable, but this garage had been turned into a storehouse for small hay bales. I had run extension cords from the house and set up a TV, VCR, and a camcorder to record this for my posterity. I ran the camcorder to the VCR so that I could tape for six hours as well as see myself and my exploits on TV.

I looked around the room at these three unconscious naked women and smiled. Jenny was bound hand and foot against the shelf on the northern wall. I had left enough play in the ropes that she could sit down if she wanted to, but was relatively rooted to the spot. On her back on the floor, Claire was roped by her arms to a support strut in the southwest corner of the garage, with her legs pulled apart by ropes tethered to the west wall for her left leg and the south wall for her right leg. There was enough slack for her to bend her legs at the knees, but she couldn’t quite close her legs. Danelle was tied up on her hands and knees over two hay bales. The ropes led from her elbows to under the bales, then resurfaced off on the side (keeping her held down and off balance), wrapping around the side and finally ending up tied just above her knees. She was rendered pretty well inert with her bare ass in the air. Nowhere to run, and with only a maddening ability to squirm, they were mine to do with as I pleased.

10-15-93 1:08.02 A.M.

## A Tension Span

“Waitaminute! Just what the hell do you think you’re writing now, buster?”

I looked up, startled by Jenny’s outburst. “Are you reading over my shoulder again?” I asked, annoyed because this was becoming a habit for her.

“I come over to your apartment to check out your homestead and see you for the first time in umpteen months,” she continued, “to find you writing a story about me. From the title it’s obvious what’s going to happen, but why are you writing about this kind of shit, anyway? And why are my sister and Danelle in it? Why not Dawn? I thought she was the one you were interested in.”

I sat at my computer desk and pondered my response. *Damn this first person dialog*, I thought to myself. Jenny plopped back down on the couch and I fished around on the floor for the stereo remote. Meat Loaf was silenced by the mute button and I began in on my tirade.

“This story is written for the sole purpose of getting your attention. You know for a fact anything I write ends up in a book and I pawn those books off on anyone I can— therefore the title scares you because it’s nasty enough to make people turn to it and start reading. You don’t want to look bad and the title sounds like it could do the job.

“Unfortunately for the reader, the title is also literally correct. The rape concept is never followed up on, it’s just used to lure the audience in for the real action. The real story is in the dialog between me and you, and in the story-in-a-story called “Skeleton in a Bottle”, which I haven’t even gotten to yet.

“As far as the reasoning for writing it– well, ya done pissed me off and it hurt a lot. When I really needed friends they had all deserted me. That year at UNL totally killed a big part of me, and all I escaped with was myself and Tammy. I really could’ve used a shoulder to cry on that Christmas Break, but it seemed like those shoulders just weren’t there when it came time for *me* to cry.”

I stopped rambling and got up to go raid the ‘fridge. I came back with a Dew (my third for the night) and a notebook. I handed the notebook to Jenny, who was awed at the shape it was in. The covers and the first six pages were in individual protective liners, while the bulk of the tablet was wedged into a liner of its own. This was the original tablet– PTWD : Personal Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, the one that started it all.

“I thought up a story a while back but I never got around to writing it down. I think I put it on hold because I felt it would have a better use later. It’s later.”

3-5-94 / 9:36.58 P.M.

3-22-94 / 12:51.43 P.M. to 1:25.20 P.M.

**Skeleton in a Bottle**

Some years into the future, a man came into possession of a technology that enabled him to be totally shielded from anything that could touch him. Air was automatically filtered as to let through oxygen, yet no carbon dioxide or any other harmful gas. He could still walk on solid ground, and even though the shield was thinnest beneath his feet, it was in no way weakest there. With this shielding engaged this man was totally invulnerable. But not safe.

This man was quickly sought after for his technology. The government practically kidnapped him to protect the technology, taking him to the nearest military base to keep his technology from foreign and terrorist eyes. This man did not like the “protection” the government offered, and wanted only to live out his life with his family, following the pursuits of knowledge as he had always done.

Upon his return home he found that his family had been kidnapped and most of his research had been stolen. A note left on the dining room table instructed him to go to a park across town where his wife and daughter would be returned in exchange for the shield generating device he presently wore on his belt.



With tears in his eyes he drove across town to the designated location. A van awaited him, and tied up inside were his wife and daughter. He asked for them to be freed, but was instructed by a voice from inside the van to remove his shielding device and step away.

The man removed the device and laid it down on the street. The back doors of the van swung open and his wife and daughter came running over to him. He took them in his arms, hugging and kissing them.

A voice from inside the van said, “Kill them all.”

The man screamed, “NO!” as he pulled his wife and daughter behind him and grabbed for the device at his feet. He jammed the ON button as a volley of bullets erupted from the van.

A bullet struck the man in the chest and he fell backwards as the shield screamed to life. Bullets ricocheted off, saving the man’s wife and daughter. But the man lay dead, encased in a shield nothing could ever get through.

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His wife and daughter mourned for a time, but the body could not be moved or buried. For one hundred years the people of that town watched as the body inside slowly decayed, leaving behind what was to later be called, “the Skeleton in a Bottle”.

\* \* \*

“That’s pretty well it,” I said.

“It’s sad, but what’s the point, really?” Jenny asked.

“The point is,” I replied, “that the man is *me*. I built up this big front that protected me from everything. An emotional barrier that made sure I was never hurt. The only thing was that I couldn’t touch or feel anything when that shield was up. I could just breathe and walk around like a normal man— but I couldn’t feel anything. I was like that for too long, and when I tried to open up I was struck down. I threw my shields back up, but it was too late. Now I’m just like that skeleton in the bottle— my shields are still up, but I’ve already died on the inside.”

“Is this when you’re going to say something corny like that you love me?” Jenny asked.

“No,” I replied, “Now is when I cry.”

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Thus ends ***The Rape Of Jenny Herzog***.

“Sometimes having your mind and emotions exploited is almost as demeaning and humiliating as having your body and feelings taken advantage of. What happened between us hurt us both. I ended up in the dark and I’ve heard she hates me. But what else is new?”

3-22-94 / 1:26.31 P.M. to 1:51.45 P.M.

**Skeleton in a Bottle : Epilogue**

After one hundred years the battery in the shield ran out of energy. The field shimmered for a minute, then fizzled out. The man encased within coughed at the rush of air, then sat up to face the morning sun. *It really worked*, the man thought as he looked down at his long dead watch. He stood up and started walking back to where his house used to be.

Upon the shield's breach one hundred years prior the device automatically locked itself up, cutting off airflow and engaging the predetermined hologram. The man received only a grazing shoulder wound, and the automatic defense control kept him in suspended animation for the duration of its battery life, playing out the hologram of his body decaying for the enjoyment of anyone seeking his device or his secrets.

The man walked up to the house that stood where his once had. A strangely familiar young man walked out from the house and ran towards him. "Great-grandfather!" the man exclaimed as he hugged the returned scientist. "Grandmother *was* telling the truth!"

## A Tension Span

The young man related to the scientist how upon the scientist's death, his wife and daughter returned home to find the two devices he had left for them, along with the note telling them that he would rejoin them in one hundred years. His daughter had promised his wife that she would continue the family line and wait for her father's return as her mother slept in shield-sleep.

The young man led the scientist into the house and down to the vault. Awaiting them there was a frail lady, half blind, yet still aware. "Father?" she whispered, and he ran to her and held her in his arms. With a whooshing sound the doors behind them opened and out walked the scientist's wife.

"I've been waiting a long time to kiss you," she said, her eyes filling with tears. The scientist took her in his arms and held her tight, kissing her and telling her everything was going to be all right as their family looked on.

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The world had undergone many changes while the man had been encased in his shield. While he had remained unchanged, the world had moved on without him, but now that he was free of his shield the world moved on *with* him.

**Retrospect**

11-30-93 11:04.59 P.M.

Times seem to be catching up with me.  
A waltz down memory lane, a slow dance with the devil himself.  
Fate? Cruel design or happenstance?  
I see the edge of the cliff, and it's calling to me.

The old times rise to the fore.  
I find myself listening to the music from so long ago,  
back from when I was young, innocent, so vulnerable.  
And this road is one I don't want to be on.

I find myself strolling past the old haunts,  
a pale husk of a man is all that remains of the boy I once was.  
It wasn't my house, nor hers for that matter.  
They tore it down, I guess it was some time ago.

The fresh air of spring.  
Young and in love.  
She smiled and we talked.  
I took her to bed.

Three, no, almost four years ago.  
Why can't I just let it go?  
It wasn't meant to be.  
Why the hell should it last?

## A Tension Span

For every chain I cast aside two take its place.  
Oh, how they drag on me.  
I am repulsed by their implications,  
yet I still find myself welcoming them to my flesh.

Looking back, my mind starts to fill in the words  
and echoes back to me *d..a..t... r..a..p...*  
Two E's lost at the ends—  
just like her and I, lost, at this end.

*You little wimp*, I cry to the night,  
*you can't even say it, can you?*  
I stumble back to the past—  
I know it so well from these unwelcomed visits.

I'm suddenly lost in a sea of sorrow.  
She didn't say yes, but she didn't say no.  
That made it all right at the time.  
But now it makes no sense.

I shove the dagger into my belly, yet feel no pain.  
I look down and find no blood, just another masquerade.  
Why can't this pain ever end?  
Why must I relive it again and again?

The way I felt that night is hard to describe.  
I felt young, in control, and a little wild.  
I'd waited for a while, and just wanted some more.  
I never knew what pain I'd cause by closing that door.

I sometimes wish I could have my friend's getaways from life,  
consuming booze, losing myself in the intrigue of flames—  
but my sin is the one sin I can **never** live down.  
I lost my innocence and my morals when my guard was down.

This creature within me called “desire” lies shamed.  
So much for chivalry, I guess it's out the door.  
She said she loved me, even after what I did.  
Looking back I now see why we lasted just a few months more.

I'll get over it. (*liar!*)  
It really didn't mean that much. (*how could you!*)  
She's probably forgotten it. (*you bastard!*)  
Did it matter anyway? (*Damn you!*)

*Damn you!*

No big deal.

***Damn you.***

***Damn you.***

*Damn you.*

“The Beautiful People”

3:42.17 P.M. 11-29-93

*Scorn not the beautiful people,  
for although their lives may appear to be shallow,  
they are also rich in pain...*

Mr. Popularity... Mr. Class Clown.

Has a way of making you smile when you're down.  
He makes everyone happy and knows he can.  
But he cries because girls find him funny, never serious,  
and he dies of an overdose— a lonely man.

Muscle-bound Weightlifter. Bigger-than-life sized.  
Flexin' for successin' in everything he does.  
Downs beer with both hands with hardly a buzz.  
Gets girlies by the dozens—  
What a way to live.  
His steroid test just came back positive.

Jockmeister. Team Leader.

No one can stop him when the heat is on.  
Went through high school with a football helmet on.  
Now his knee is blown out  
and his academics lie in a paralyzed fit.  
He found out that every door that says “Enter”  
on the other side says “Exit”.

Cheerleader. Not just another pretty face.  
Wears her skirt short just to make the guys drool.  
And everyone knows that she's the pride of the school.  
Too bad the quarterback did more than score.  
Now she's pregnant, alone, and the school's disgrace.  
She's just a winner who lost her biological race.



Now it can't be said that tragedy  
    rules everyone's life—  
but a life of popularity  
    is a life of strife.  
The life of the beautiful ones is longed for  
    by every social outcast,  
trying hard to make their mark today,  
    not just be a figment in someone else's past.  
Some friendships run shallow  
    instead of running deep,  
and with college one step away  
    sometimes friends don't always keep.  
Sociality— what hell could be worse?  
    One man's paradise.  
    Another man's curse.

**This Masterpiece**

12-13-93

8:54.13 P.M.

I rode west.

The motorcycle was as one with the road as I crossed the plains.

The wind is whipping through my hair.

The sun is high in the sky.

My leather jacket bakes from the heat— like the road.

Ponytail? ...*nahh*.

Sunglasses with no glare from the road.

Yellow lines, dashes, dashes, lines, dashes.

Lines.

I am headed for the hills for I know love can be found there.

The sun goes down.

The moon is full and my tank is empty.

Fuel— for bike and man.

I light up a cigarette and take a drag.

Image is everything.

I cough and drop the smoke; smash it with a toe.

Image is nothing.

I gun the accelerator and am off.

Gas station left in the dust, duty fulfilled.

Passing lane— don't do it, it's a trick.

Patience...

a virtue, the key, a calmness... *hmmm.*

Trees line the road.

I like trees.

It's getting cold.

I could stop and rest, but I won't.

Midnight.

The air is so quiet; the engine roar so pure.

I am lost in the night's embrace  
as the road ribbons through the hills.

I look up.

Stars... windows to heaven.

"Hi, God."

[ I wave ]

**Sheila**

12-10-93 10:36.58 P.M.

I first met this sweetheart in my childhood.  
She was the cutest girl I had ever seen.  
I thought she was going to last forever.  
I don't understand why guys can be so mean.

I called her a friend, and sometimes she was more.  
Why this shy girl fell from grace no one knows for sure.  
During the day Sheila was her given name,  
but at night the guys had other names for her.

I remember back in kindergarten,  
when she asked me if I would be her boyfriend.  
I later found out I was her fourth that day—  
it didn't matter. I just didn't want it to end.

I saw her walking down the street a few years back.  
I caught myself thinking about what could have been.  
She winked at me and said it would never last.  
But that never meant it couldn't happen.

Our high school years came and went in a blur.  
Sheila spent all her nights out on the town.  
She flirted and she cooed, laughing at every pass.  
If she liked what she saw, she just might go down.

I remember those nights she ran to my arms;  
crying from the pain– not so tough on the inside.  
She acted like a tramp and lost out in her games.  
Wasted youth withered behind a mask of pride.

Never before and never since have I heard the cry of a horny angel.  
Yet every time I made love to her it was only in my dreams.  
I awoke with visions of her lips just a breath away–  
her mussed up hair and lace underwear falling apart at the seams.

She was always smiling, and sure she always laughed.  
I suppose the life of the party agrees with living in sin.  
Why she always went back for more I'll never know.  
But they always took her and used her and left her again.

I got a letter the other day and out poured her life.  
Sheila wrote of boys and men, hopes and a broken heart.  
I wished for her a happy ending after all her pain.  
I'll never know where she went, our worlds grew too far apart...

Sometimes I hear the low rumble of pianos.

The lowest key, and a half note lower.

The drone... the echoed pulse.

It pounds over and over and over as I cover my ears and scream.

*The first time is always the loudest, my pretty.*

The bed creaks faster as I sweat.

*The first time is when they make the most noise.*

I cry out in the night.

Fists connect with faces unseen.

Sobs, heard, yet drowned out by the pounding in my body.

In her body.

Scream. Inhale. Scream. Inhale, hoarser this time.

Scream.

Scream.

*Let it out*, I think to myself.

Thrust.

Slap.

I laugh as she cries.

I plunge and surge into the wetness I have created.

Into the wetness I have craved.

Into the wetness I have stolen, perverted, coveted so much...  
then exploited.

I towel off after one last show of dominance, a final shove into a trembling mass.

Get up, I told her.

Go away she yelled.

I punched and she fell, bloodied.

I laughed as I pulled on my shoes.

*Will she return to me on some other day?*

I question

as she stumbles out the door, scared, so weak from my exploits.

*Yes, she shall*, as I lick at my wrist.

Sweat, blood, feminine both.

*Yes, she shall.*

Ha Ha Ha, as I hunt her down for more...

8:36.20 P.M. 1-6-94

A new year in which to spread fear...

3-22-94 / 12:39.41 P.M. to 12:48.56 P.M.

**Fade to Nothing**

Time has not been kind.

I have entered uncharted territory,

lost and alone,

with only unfamiliar stars to guide me.

I have lost sight of the heroes

and have been reduced to fading away.

*Diminuendo niente.*

Fade to nothing.

I wish to pick up my sword

and fight once again for glory and honor—

but my arm has grown tired,

and my soul doesn't shine so pure.

I can no longer take up arms

for my only oppressor is myself.

My battle was lost

long before I knew it was fought.

Angel of Mercy. Angel of Death.

She gently caresses my temple,

whispers my name into my ear,

then kisses me with lips

as soft as rose... *petals?*



Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
& 1-31-94 8:05.00 A.M.

**Sketches of Remorse**

Last night I drew a picture  
    trying to summarize all I'd heard.  
Screaming accusations and raised fists—  
    violence overcoming the words.  
I drew of a hundred burning homes  
    and looked on as a hundred mothers cried.  
I suppose the attempts at peace failed.  
    I wonder this time who lied.  
Gunfire rages in a war-torn town,  
    echoes never ending in the night.  
Leaders hang their heads in disgrace;  
    they know no one can win in this fight.  
I thought the decade of aggression  
    would end in a decade of peace,  
but all I see in the news at night  
    are scenes that make sure nightmares never cease.

## A Tension Span

2-16-94 / 4:09.46 P.M.

### Losing Control

“Pull the trigger. Pull the trigger.”

A voice urges me in a whisper.

I close my eyes to pray

but my rage never fades away.

I never saw the writing on the wall

‘cause you backed me up to it.

Well guess what, babe?

You finally blew it.

A gun in one hand and a clip in the other,

joined together make me one bad mother.

The gun trembles as I contemplate future sins.

Good-bye Heaven. Here’s where Hell begins...

3-5-94 / 9:09.40 P.M. to 9:35.08 P.M.

**Fume TKO**

I'm a plant.

I'm holding a plant.

Am I holding myself?

*"It's the fumes."*

No, it's the rapture of sensory overload.

Watching the clouds roll by...

*"Pick him up. Get him some air."*

C'mere sky. Let me get ahold of you.

I'm gonna rock your world.

Gonna grasp your soul.

*"He's losing it."*

Ahh, darkness.

Run, feeble light.

Fill some other sighted someone's niche.

Embrace darkness like a deep-sea fish.

Hee... Hee...

*"He's not breathing. He's turning blue."*

Turtle dove.

*"Call an ambulance!"*

Blue flamingoes.

*"Breathe, dammit!"*

Butterflies.

***"Breathe!"***

Cherubim

## A Tension Span

And the *supreme loner* went forth, only to have his travels continued by the *extreme outcast*. He walked slowly with fists clenched, looking about him as a stranger would in unfamiliar territory, surrounded by people who offer only disparaging looks or, even worse, outright hatred.

“Fuck ‘em,” he muttered under his breath. “Who needs the ones who do nothing but bring you down because they can’t lift themselves up?”

No one answered, of course, for the conversation only took place in his head. No one really heard, and no one really cared. And when they did, well, who knows if they *really* cared?

Or listened.

“Go away,” he said for the third time. “Just go away.”

Why they insist on poking and prodding he would never know.

“Just leave me alone,” as they pulled closer. “Go away,” as they badgered him to the point that he was about to lose control. “Why can’t you just let me be?” he whispered, knowing full well that in a few hours or days everything would be back to “normal”.

“Open up,” was all they asked, “tell me what you’re thinking.”

“I don’t want to know what I’m thinking. I don’t want to explore the recesses of my mind that are screaming for audience. I just don’t want to know why I’m so fucking angry. I just *do not want to know*.”

“Tell me,” they pleaded. “I’m trying to help.”

“Help yourself, ‘cause you’re just making us both suffer.”

## Fade to Nothing

No one listened, of course, for they were both stubborn and at this point in time had convinced themselves that they were right— he for remaining silent, and she for attempting to find out what was troubling him.

He just laid there, slowly numbing out his body to the feelings racing through his mind.

“Just leave me alone,” he said, “I’ll be fine in the morning.” He knew this to be true for this had happened many times before and more often than not a new day brought about a return to normalcy.

Silence. I don’t know what to type.

I don’t know what to type.

I don’t know what to type.

I don’t know what to type.

I don’t know what to type.

Somebody told me once that if you were stuck without knowing what to type that you should type that. They’re full of shit.

I walked away before she could make me tell her how I felt because I feared that my will was strong enough to hold back until I felt I had to *show* how I felt. With my body numb and my mind racing, I left.

And here I sit typing, with her reading over my shoulder.

Neither one of us knows when this night is going to be over—sometimes daylight doesn’t define the day.

Saturday, April 2nd, 1994. 12:49.26 A.M.

**“Who knows why butterflies fly,  
yet caterpillars seem so damn dumb.”**

“I can sometimes imagine what virgin eyes were like,  
and then I use them to cry over innocence lost..”

“Chaste is a waste, sex to express.”

“Dreams and reality– such distant cousins, it seems...”

*“The more I find myself unable to fly  
the less I find myself willing to walk.”*

“Somewhere between heaven and hell  
rests the back seat of a car and young desires.”

“You’ve seen or heard or maybe even experienced  
all of this before, I’m just emphasizing what I feel  
are the important things in case you missed their meanings  
or scope the first time.”

6-8-94 9:23.44 A.M. (In the morning?)

**Girl On My Mind**

There's a girl I know who stands on a corner.

She knows my name.

She smiles a lot trying to hide her shame.

If you've got the money, she'll be yours for a while...

She was someone's daughter once—

Daddy's pride and joy.

But he wanted a son, and she's just a rich man's toy.

He said he loved her... but I don't think so.

I can see in her eyes the pain inside.

She's been to hell and back

on her back

and at night she cries.

I try to be her friend.

I hold her hand and call her by her name.

I know dirty hands have felt her and dirty men have been inside.

But I don't mind.

This dolled up girl in her best dress,

takes you to heaven, even though she can't get there herself...

at least not yet.

## A Tension Span

6-1-94 6:31.24 to 6:45.15 P.M.

### A Single Tear

So hard to let go.

Funny how the night's whispered words  
are seldom echoed the following day.

I'm sorry for what's gone wrong today.

I never meant the words that hurt your feelings.

It seems our love is straying away.

Would you shed a single tear...

(Or a flowing river?)

If I walked out that door today?

Would you need to have me to run to

If I once turned away?

Would you sleep so soundly alone—

With only my memories to caress you to sleep?

It seems our love was shallow, our feelings not so deep...

The words you speak frighten me.

I vowed my love to you—

and you agreed that your heart was true.

Now all I ever feel is blue.

How can you say I cheated on you when you never played fair?

I never meant to hurt your feelings.

Maybe it's better that it ends this way.



## Fade to Nothing

Will you shed a single tear...

(Or a flowing river?)

When I walk out that door today?

Would you call me a scoundrel for stealing your heart

And then leaving it broken this way?

Can you imagine life without me?

We grew together, then so far apart.

We lie in a shambles, so much for our happy start.

Five years ago today

We went our separate ways.

She shed more than a single tear.

And I said more than my share.

The fog never lifted and I wait by the phone

Damn this life of living alone...

## A Tension Span

6-7-94 9:23.51 P.M. to 11:02.56 P.M.

### Cold hands, Glassy eyes

[ To every angel dragged down from grace who kept her chin up ]

I remember when I heard the news.

I cursed the day, shook my head, and cried.

“She was so innocent” was all I could say.

I could see her with fear and violation in her eyes.

And the images of what they did wouldn't go away.

He had cold hands and she had glassy eyes.

A grip so hard, an intent he'd follow through.

Without a thought he undid her heart and trust.

Losing this girl to a bitter woman.

Losing this girl to a bitter woman.

I never knew the pain she hid.

She acted so nice to hide what burned within.

A shame so rough a hatred so true.

A distrust of everything a man can do.

I knew that sometimes she cried and found it so hard to open up.

Looking back I can see why she held back.

This memory haunting her.

This memory that made her hurt.

## Fade to Nothing

He had cold hands and she had glassy eyes.  
A grip so hard, an intent he'd follow through.  
Without a thought he undid her heart and trust.  
Losing this girl to a bitter woman.  
Losing this girl to a bitter woman.

I always wanted to comfort her.  
I always wanted to tell her everything would be all right.  
Nothing could make things right again, though.

I wanted to walk with her and talk of dreams.  
And even if I am her friend, I'm just another guy—  
to be mistrusted, to question, to wonder of motives.

Her boyfriends now have a battle to win her heart and trust.  
Left with a girl who's been through too much too soon,  
who sees the world through glassy eyes and heartache.

**Parables Better Left Unsaid**

6-27-94

6:29.13 P.M. to 6:54.56 P.M.

She sat staring out the window.

“Why not me?” she asked of no one in particular.

I answered with a shrug, not knowing what to say.

Her father’s body lie still in a slumber from which he’ll never wake.

Though dead, I could only remember what he’d said to me...

Who knows why the sky is blue and it rains in the spring?

Who knows why the truth rings through but words still sting?

Who knows why chains bind and people yearn to breathe free?

Who knows why the wind blows, and who knows “Why me?”

“A wise man once said that you shouldn’t curse the spring showers.

He wasn’t wise, just been through a little more than you and I.”

He looked out his window and pointed to a bed of flowers.

“You cower under umbrellas, but without rain they’d die.”

“I’ve seen a lot pass by this window.

Every person has a story, every face has secrets, that much is for sure.

I’ve seen a lot pass by this window.

But it seems like it’s all starting to blur.”

“Little Janey used to run by here every day on her way to school.  
Oh how they teased her about her pigtails and dress.  
But she grew up smart– she was no man’s fool.  
I heard they found her dead and naked, read it in the press.  
I swear I can still see her run by sometimes, but I guess I’m mistaken.”

“I saw a kid pull a gun on a lady out there three years ago today.  
He said, “Hand over your purse and you won’t get hurt.”  
He didn’t know that he wasn’t going to get away.  
Some “hero” jumped him, the gun went off, and he’s under six feet of dirt.  
I can remember the fear in his eyes, and I’ve seen it since...”

“My kids used to play out there in that yard.”  
He smiled at that, and pointed to where he taught Tom to play ball.  
“Haven’t seen either one in eight years, not even gotten a card.  
I wonder if it’s too much of a bother to even try and call.”  
He shook his head and whispered, “it’s never easy being old and lonely...”

“I’ve seen a lot pass by this window.  
Every person has a story, every face has secrets, that’s for sure.  
I’ve seen a lot pass by this window.  
But it seems like it’s all starting to blur.”

**The Next Time I Talk to Einstein**

6-30-94 9:51.23 P.M.

He's just a man like you and I.

I saw him once, maybe twice down by the station.

He looked through everyone there and was deep in thoughts

I can't even imagine.

He mumbled something and I said, "Beg your pardon?"

He said, "Son, everything is relative.

Everything is just something else.

Your good is someone else's best,

and yet another someone's average try.

Yes, everything's relative."

I told him that was cool.

He said it's just an observation.

He's been dead since before I was born, so who's the fool?

The next time I talk to Einstein, I'll ask him something for you.

He's really got his head a going.

His scope is so large he can see the little things.

He's got the world to a science, but he's beyond being seen.

I saw him the other day down at the store.

He wondered what was new.

I asked him if pi was the mystery I've always been told.

He laughed and said,

"It's all so much easier once you see the pattern."

He whispered the last digit in my ear, and I said, "Oh, really."

"It's obvious of course. Everything's relative."

The next time I talk to Einstein, I'll ask him why.

He says everything that's not theoretical is at least hypothetical.

I can't believe what he means when he talks of physics,

but he does quite well.

"Everything's relative."

Einstein told me so.

**Singled Out**

7-21-94 5:08.21 P.M. to 5:17.13 P.M.

*I sing my song.*

Not for a screaming crowd of thousands  
but an expectant audience of one.

Does she know my heart and soul are in it?

Does she believe in the words?

Does she sway to the rhythm?

She does all this and more.

The lights dim.

The chorus begins.

Her eyes water and my voice grows rasp.

The story is sad.

The story must be told.

The story means more than the words can say.

The song is over.

The lights are off.

The silence is interrupted by her whispered, "yes".

She takes my hand.

The club is closed,

but you can still hear the song on her lips.

Those lips that are kissing mine.

## A Tension Span

### Overflow

1:53.07 A.M. to 2:04.34 A.M.

7-25-94

A half-step over the edge  
and breaking my back to turn around  
to catch myself.  
It's so hard to live life to its fullest  
when you don't dare spill even a single drop.  
The stars beckon and the sunset calls.  
I'm running away from it all.  
I'm not to blame for the life  
you've been forced to lead.  
I can't help what happened  
before I even knew your name.  
But I'm sorry just the same.  
And I'm still running— but only into your arms.  
Your eyes grow too wide once you've seen it all.  
Your mind won't slow down once you get it going.  
Your body doesn't stop—  
Your body doesn't stop 'til it's overflowing.  
I'm running with you...  
We can't hold back what we have together.  
Passion is a thrill; Forgiving is a vice.  
Slowing down kills.  
Loving, you question. I answer, we cry.  
I stand before you.  
My heart overflowing.



8-8-94 / 8:54.21 P.M. and 8-10-94 / 6:16.00 A.M.

**'Cous of Great Thoughts**

I had this friend once.  
He was a year older and so much wiser.  
I remember laying in the grass at grandpa's house  
    looking at the clouds and thinking great thoughts.  
That was ages ago.

We had different backgrounds,  
and different styles,  
but somehow we had enough in common.  
We were never best buddies,  
but I always knew his phone number,  
    and we'd talk of great things in the schools halls.  
I guess that wasn't so long ago.

College brought on changes  
and it drew our worlds apart.  
He was so cool to my high schooler's eyes,  
then he started smoking weed to be even cooler.  
    I didn't notice the difference, lost in great thoughts,  
only a few years ago.

I hadn't seen him for almost a year,  
but he showed up the other day.  
We shook hands and laughed for a while.  
We talked of the past and avoided our differences,  
    and I can only wonder what great thoughts  
he's thinking now...

**Prozac Prose**

9-17-94 9:23.00 P.M. to 9:42.11 P.M.

Ha HA Ha.

Welcome to shiny land (Hell)  
where the kids smile (Hell)  
and everyone is happy (Hell)  
We all love each other (Hell)  
and life is great (Hell)  
and we have no worries (Hell)  
because God (Hell)  
is good to us (Hell)

Burn motherfucker burn.

I want to hurt you.

Hit you.

Blacken you.

Berate you.

Strip you naked for the world to see.

Embarrass you.

Caress you the way only lovers do.

Poke you.

Prod you.

Totally fucking rod you.

Play with your mind.

Wrap you around my fingers.

Break your spirit.

Rape your soul.

Call you dirty.

Call you whore.

I want to raise your hopes.  
Just so I can shatter your dreams.  
    Kick you down.  
    Spit at you.  
    Piss in your face.  
        You shining disgrace.  
    Lick you.  
    Spank you.  
        Sodomize you every night.  
    Spoil you.  
Worship you.  
Covet you.  
        Damn you.  
Kill you.  
Kill you.  
Kill you.  
    Every day you breathe foul air.  
Every time you cry I feel so warm inside.  
I need your pain.  
I kill your pride.  
    Shove deep inside.  
Choke you.  
Harder.  
    Punch you again and again and  
    again.  
        Kiss you there.  
Then destroy forever where pleasures dare.

## A Tension Span

Your body trembles.

Weak from sex.

And battered.

Anguish.

Pain.

Get up, bitch.

Put you down.

Squeeze you tight.

Pinch your breasts.

Burn cigarettes into your ass.

Tie you to a tree.

Set the crowd upon your body.

Watch, intrigued.

Triple-teamed.

Orgasm.

Overloaded.

With dozens of more dirty men to go.

You scream “No!” but it’s too late.

Five hours later

there’s not much left of you.

Blood and piss and come and spoo.

Unconscious and full of jism.

Half dead (body).

Tortured, withered (soul).

Scarred, destroyed (innocence).

You got what you get– what you deserve.

Welcome to shiny land.

Shiny, shiny, land...

10-21-94 9:46.38 P.M. // 10:18.31 P.M.

## **Remember**

Surreal stretches into the plain unreal. The mind wanders past the barricades arisen from years and years of repression. “You’ve gone too far!” the walls whisper urgently, but a mind has no hearing, just an awareness of sound. The lights dazzle and blind. Images of the past pass before me. “Remember...” What? Remember what? But the present arrives before I can figure it out. “Now” persists, tugging me towards the future. “Remember...” What? Remember what?

Tomorrow passes into the next, and into the day after that. All I see are clouds, with each one containing pictures limited only by my imagination. Can’t you see the fish? Watch for a little while as I swim.

Strung out, tired, desperate for nicotine, and high on much more than life, reality takes on a shade of the purest blue. Crucified again in a world full of sin, every messiah cries and dies and no one gives a damn anyway. Flesh burns away leaving ashes and charred bones. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust— burning in hell for being a worthless fuck. Open your eyes and open your mouth. I’ll cram them both full with everything I’ve got. What’s the point when you can’t see what I’m showing you or understand what I’m instilling in you? Maybe you should give up since you’ll never get ahead and you’ll always be a behind.

10-3-94 10:52.43 P.M. // 11:29.09 P.M.

**Frozen**

Frozen.

Eternity blinks in a flash. The breeze blows coolly, sending goosebumps across my flesh. An awakening? An awareness?

A lizard lies basking in the sun, curled up on a rock, pausing only to stretch out to soak in the light of day. The sun sets. The moon rises on a barren wasteland of sand and rock and tumbleweeds without a purpose.

Her eyes of purest blue.

Too much time to think so twisted. Crumbled walls and distorted visions. A fairy tale with more than trolls and elves, the dwarves who toil, mares and foals. Waves crash and oceans swell. Time passed and the old tree fell. Insanity, the caress of bliss upon the mind, forever twisting and pushing limits unlimited by society's blind eye. A casual glance or heartfelt advice, too little, years too late. If only we'd met when I was eight. Too young to feel the desires, too old for the games kiddies played. Lost once again in the mental parade.

Leaning against the wall I once looked through I contemplate breaking your neck, only to find that my fingers are gripped around my own neck. I'm too damn tired to squeeze, yet too damn bored to just let go. I scream at the mirror, but it doesn't really care. You aren't here (what else is new?) so I'm staring at the ceiling because there's nothing else to do.

Penance fails to erase the shame, band-aids won't heal the pain. Why leave a scar when you can leave an eternal wound? Words project, sting, and kill little pieces of me on the inside. "Open up." To which I laugh as I slam myself behind yet another locked door.

The lights are off and I'm feeling really shy. Locked in the fetal position, naked like a child. Invulnerable in my own innocent way, passing through the night into another nothing day.

But it's still dark.

I stare at the key on the floor and try to imagine silence to block out the sound of you pounding on the other side of the locked door.

Good night.

10-30-94 11:04.54 P.M. // 11:24.44 P.M.

**Whore**

Cast me into the sea, to be drug into the depths. To drown, to die, to pass beyond the life of lies. Shedding tears of jealousy, of shame, betrayal and damnation. Tears that were of happiness but a few months ago have turned into a river of sorrow. Who takes precedence in a life of dreams and nightmares? Closed eyes betray the demons inside. Who knows what they hide? I know. And inside I die.

I offer my life to the holy altar of religions unspoken. With oaths of vengeance, I attune to the raige within, focusing on an evil I trusted with my everything. My heart lies broken and beaten by words you never uttered and feelings you never cared. Emotions chilled and vows wavered, sending caresses from another to a body I thought intertwined with mine and mine alone. I guessed wrong and now feel the lash of a tongue I once licked with my own. I never noticed that the tongue was forked, or that the heart longed for more than I was willing to give.

Doves fly with peace and freedom, unaware of the man behind the trigger. BOOM! Friends console the pain, but sometimes the pain they create will never go away. Situations suck, but so does life and honesty. Angels falter in their flights as they witness the pain of a heart being broken and a spirit being crushed by one known once as a friend, then as a lover, and then...



**Forevermore**

9-7-94 11:27.36 P.M. to 11:38.18 P.M.

Imagine a world where only extremes exist.  
There is no gray. There is no maybe.  
And if wishes came true no one would be left wanting.  
But if we were all perfect we'd all be fools.  
And if we were all happy we'd all be ashamed.  
And if we would all live forever we'd all die young.  
And if we knew the way we'd still be lost.  
And if the light shone brightly we'd still be in darkness.  
And if we were all innocent we'd all be liars.  
And the sun would never set.  
And the moon would never send us nightmares, or dreams.  
And time would fade us into memories...  
Or just push us towards a tomorrow so similar to yesterday.

**Reservations**

1-6-95 12:37.19 A.M. to 1:01.20 A.M.

It's quitting time but I don't want to go home.  
'Cause after last night, I might be alone.  
We had another fight, with words we shouldn't have said.  
Maybe it's over between us, the feelings are looking dead.

"Hello sir, I'd like a room.  
Yes, for tonight.  
The second story will do,  
    this first one's not turning out right.  
A single bed is what I prefer,  
'cause if I had a double,  
I might have enough room to think of her..."

I don't know what's happened between the two of us.  
She slammed another door, and all I could do was cuss.  
I kept saying the wrong thing, every wrong way.  
What happened to my bride of yesterday, who swore forever starts  
today?

"Hello sir, I'd like a room.  
Yes, for tonight.  
The second story will do,  
    this first one's not turning out right.  
A single bed is what I prefer,  
'cause if I had a double,  
I might have enough room to think of her..."

I walked in the front door, prepared to end it all.  
She stood there crying, and my pride grew real small.  
“I’m sorry for all the things I’ve done,” was all I could say.  
She nodded, then kissed me, and said, “Baby, that’s okay.”

We walked out the door, leaving our troubles home that night.  
I told her I had a room, if that was all right.  
And that its single bed could sleep two at the most.  
We’d have to do like old times, and just hold each other close...

“Hello?  
Yes, I’d like to make a reservation.  
I need a table for two...”

**Picket Fences**

6-30-94 9:53.40 P.M. to 10:11.13 P.M.

It's ten o'clock and getting cold.  
I've been walking down these tracks all day (all my life).  
They keep right on going but I'm getting nowhere.  
I'm thinking about your face and smiling.  
You're miles away and days behind.  
I'm still walking.

I never had a home long enough to know what the hell it meant.  
I've been staring at my shoes taking step after step.  
I keep my hands in my pockets 'cause it's comfortable.  
Maybe I don't look you in the eye, but maybe I don't have to.

I may be a father and I'm just twenty years old.  
Your face keeps haunting me;  
Your memories aren't going to leave me alone.  
You taught me how to love— you taught me how to live.  
You taught me lots of things,  
but in return I didn't have much to give.

I wanted so much to run to you.  
To run up your sidewalk... into your house... and to your room.  
But I don't know how to live your life.  
My life is the streets, my life is the tracks.

I want to know what's on the other side of the picket fences.  
I want to know what's on the other side.  
I can see through the window into your room,  
but I'm in the street and you're almost a world away.

The tracks are still going and I'm going along with them.  
Two days later I'm beyond recognition.  
A broken heart? Who are you kidding?  
The street claims me as its next of kin.

Even though I want to run to you  
I can't make it past the picket fences.  
I couldn't live if I'd make it there to find you weren't home.  
I'd be so alone.  
*And I'd whisper your name to an empty room.*

**Wishing Well**

4-2-95

1:59.21 A.M. to the non-existent 2:26.17 A.M.

Running, never looking back.  
Took a beating, stood my ground, took up the slack.  
Fought through each day to sleep another troubled night.  
Tossed and turned, but what was my fright?

Look in the mirror, tell me what I'll see.  
Just another face, just another walking mystery.  
But behind the mask it's just me inside.  
Trouble is, though, it's behind my foolish pride...

Woke up drunk in a wishing well.  
Funny how I felt so alive, after livin' through living hell.  
Took in another breath and fought for life.  
Laughed at my demons, laughed at my strife.  
And as I pulled a quarter from behind my ear,  
I looked at the sunrise and felt no fear...

Last time I saw her she was sixteen and full of life.  
Now two years later she's a mother but no man's wife.  
Hard not to cry for a woman who's much too young.  
But it's only a shame how low her head is hung.

## Numb

I tried so hard to find for her another way,  
but whispered words don't mean a damn when night turns to day.  
It's easy to fall for the charms when the lights go down,  
and your head and your heart start spinning 'round.

Woke up drunk in a wishing well.  
Funny how we felt so alive, not being the ones who kiss and tell.  
Took in another breath and pondered our lives.  
Filled with a hope that our kindred spirit revives.  
With visions of church bells ringing within a year,  
I looked at the sunrise and felt no fear...  
I looked at the sunrise and felt no fear...  
I looked at the sunrise...

**To Rise Amidst the Fall**

3-19-95 9:26.03 A.M. to 9:34.08 A.M.

I spent all last night on my knees,  
burning my demons one by one  
until my morning came  
and my inner battle was won.

I spent all day on my knees,  
screaming at a wasted life  
until my voice grew hoarse  
and no one cared anyway.

I've spent all my life on my knees,  
oppressed by fate and society's whims  
until my head lifted and my chains broke free  
'cause I won't take your sins any more.

I'm gonna spend all night on my feet,  
and all tomorrow,  
and the next day,  
and the next,  
and the next  
you'll see me standing proudly.



6-22-95 11:15.15 P.M. to 11:35.17 P.M.

## Hooker

She actually looked cute once you looked past the layers of makeup and fake-looks and saw that hurt look in her eyes. She just recognized me, as I had recognized her just a minute before. I sat in my car, leaning towards the passenger window I had hastily rolled down upon seeing her standing her stance on the strip. She had managed to say, “Two hundred for anything you want,” before she saw past the routine and into my face. She had always been one of “those girls” in high school– the kind you weren’t even supposed to be worthy of looking at, let alone think of being with. I remembered getting snubbed for four long adolescent years, and a smile came to my lips as I opened the door and commanded, “Get in.”

I treated her dirty. I took her to the edge just to watch her writhe in unfulfilled desire as I backed off. I shoved her over in a flurry of thrusts, then slowed to listen to her coo and feel her body tremble. With rhythmic motion I let her rise and fly, then soar with her eyes closed and her mouth breathlessly wide. She reminded me of the innocent child she once was every time she curled up after another wave went through her body. The hours clicked by slowly as the night grew to day, and I knew that every pleasure she felt added an ounce of guilt and a pound of shame...

**Mortally wounded**

11-19-95

11:32.08 P.M. to 11:38.42 P.M.

*Look into my eyes.*

Can't help being mortally shy.

Born too late for the crowd that suits me.

Born too early for the groups that pollute me.

Words unspoken.

Fear the rejection more than living the lie of the unfulfilled.

Does she? Would she?

Never know.

I plead for a look, a laugh to make my day worthwhile.

She gives it in passing, not knowing its effects.

I look for hints so subtle I can hardly bear to hope for.

Yet know it's all in my head.

She doesn't know me like I wish she could.

Do I ask her?

Or question forever if she would?

**Winged Angel**

11-22-95

11:28.54 P.M. to 11:37.07 P.M.

Winged angel on bended knee

I ask that you watch over me.

Horned devil with forked tail

I hope your schemes for me fail.

Longest night of darkest mood

I hope you are but an interlude.

Brightest day of sunny cheer

I pray your light destroys my fear.

Gentle touch from dearest face

I live forever for your embrace.

Soothing faith from lifelong friend

My love for you will never end.

Grandparents

11-22-95

11:51.56 P.M.

Grandparents know love for generations.

Have encouraged the triumphs.

Have endured the trials.

*Walked hand in hand for many, many miles.*

Have seen children blossom into adulthood.

Have watched their children leave the nest.

*Made their mistakes, but always did their best.*

Have experienced the joy of becoming “parents” once again.

Have felt the enduring affection from their grandchildren’s eyes.

*Told stories of the good old days, and were so wise.*

Have always been there for strength and support.

Have always been guided by God above.

*And have spread for generations,  
this thing called “love”.*

**G-12 (The Princess)**

12-14-95

9:18.54 P.M. to 9:35.25 P.M.

Hey, girl.

I thought I'd just let you know that you're beautiful.

Don't get me wrong, I don't need affection.

I just want you to know I appreciate your attention.

Don't laugh 'cause I'm shy.

You know I wouldn't kid you.

It's been far too long since I could open up.

And far longer since it was safe for me to.

Call it foolish, but I'm glad you showed up.

Where else would either of us be?

Who'd have known we'd get along?

Who'd have thought we'd ever meet?

This path we wander looks so long.

Some day we'll say goodbye and go separate ways.

But until then I'll hold your hand.

Even if only in my dreams.

**A Little Horace**

12-29-95

10:42.42 P.M. to 11:20.22 P.M.

Been to the bars every weekend.  
Has had hundreds of beers with the guys.  
But Horace can't ever seem to settle down,  
And loneliness clouds every star-filled sky.

What's wrong with Horace?  
To keep you warm at night?  
Hey, what's wrong with Horace?  
Couldn't get a date tonight?  
Fifty new faces every year.  
Living single the biggest fear.  
No one to hold, no one to care.  
No one to love, if only they'd dare.  
With a thousand opening lines to use.  
Dancing every dance under the sun.  
One night stands litter the past.  
Slept in every bed but the right one.

What's wrong with Horace?  
To cuddle up next to at night?  
Hey, what's wrong with Horace?  
Didja get a date tonight?  
I guess everyone loves a little Horace.  
'Cause everyone knows Horace gives so much more.  
Go ahead, try Horace— you know what's in store.  
And you know that next year,  
there'll be some new Horace to score.

**Older Women**

2-9-96 12:19.15 A.M.

She thinks she's gone past her prime,  
but I'm thinking about her all the time.  
She's seen more things than I in life,  
even settled down, was once a wife.  
She thought her time had come and gone,  
which might have been if I hadn't come along.

So she's not from my generation,  
and holds on to an old fashioned reservation.  
Age is important only when you deal in wine,  
but it don't matter in a friendly sixty-nine.  
She's still my type, my sex type thing.  
I hope this girl will let us have a fling.

Stealing kisses under the cover of night.  
Who cares if they say it's not right?  
If we don't mind, then there's no sin,  
in exploring the joys of skin on skin.  
She means too much to not even try.  
I curse this life of being shy.

So I thank God for summer sunsets and older women,  
long walks, cold beer, and skinny dipping.  
They say it's not the mileage,  
but the shape the engine is in...  
It wouldn't, couldn't last— I know it's true,  
but we both need what our dreams make us do.  
Is she up to one more pass around this track?  
“Just close your eyes...  
and don't look back...”

**Play Pretend**

3-7-96 8:47.29 P.M. to 9:00.41 P.M.

Let's play pretend.

So here we go again and it's just another excuse to accuse the labelers and censors and blackmailers and scapegoats of removing the horizon from this sunny sunrise. So who's really pissed? Who cares? You won't be missed. With cat like reflexes I lick my back clean of your footprints. Dusting off your hatred and waves of crap you've thrown my way. Take that, as I stand up once again. You think you've won? Ha. You poor bastard— you just don't get it, do you? You can't stop this ball you've let get into motion. Open wide, the ice pick of truth with shove deeper and deeper every time you cry.

Who's crying now?

Wake up to the cold wind in your face and my breath at your neck. Who's winning this race? You look over your shoulder to find I'm just not there. In your face like a cold slap from an ex-girlfriend— I'm you and you're me and this scares you. And scares me even more. Take the demon, take the angel. Broken wings and sins that seem so small after the hells you've been through and the evils you've committed. Take my hand. You reach out and find out that this time *I'm* doing the stepping.

Control freaked the image of reality. Taken aback by the simplest of thoughts, something unique and you didn't have a part in it other than having it noticed. Watch me now. You can't help yourself, can you? Sit back and relax, it's only the ending that will kill you. Can't see the credits? That's probably because you're already dead.



## Numb

You made your bed but can't stand to lie on the nails. Too bad, little one, you knew what you were getting yourself into when you crossed the line. When you cross me, I get to dot your eye. When you step on me, I get to run over you. When you devastate me, I get to ruin you. When you betray me, I can only bear the pain, for betrayal knows no retribution— only revenge. They say it is sweet, but it seems so bitter to me. So damn bitter. But that doesn't mean you'll escape it.

Run, coward.

I understand you feel like the mouse in a cage, but even rats get killed off. So maybe it won't be a hundred thousand volts up your ass, but I bet you'll be begging for that before I'm through with you. Welcome to hell.

---

### **Get Together**

3-2-96 2:34.45 A.M. to 2:58.32 A.M.

So maybe we dream too much.

Does it matter that we come from different worlds?

If I took the subway, you'd take the train.

I'd curse the darkness, and you'd laugh at the rain.

We'd look at the diamonds and pearls.

And wait for the next station, one closer to you.

Doing everything to keep you in my head.

Singing along to every slow song on the radio.

If I took the highway, you'd take a plane.

I'd pass through the traffic, and you couldn't complain.

We'll be together soon, this much I know.

Changing to the next station, one closer to you.

We whisper the words we both need to hear.

Opening our hearts to a love felt by so few.

If I'd ask the question, you'd stand at my side.

I'd be your groom, and you'd be my bride.

We'd walk down the aisle and say, "I do".

Living our lives together our next step, one closer to you.

---

**Learning to Feel**

3-7-96

9:25.16 P.M. to 9:41.33 P.M.

Somebody pinch me.

I'm not kidding.

Go ahead.

I'm waiting.

What? You already did?

Try it again.

Nope.

Didn't feel a thing.

How ironic.

Lived my whole life for a feeling.

And that's the one thing I don't have.

Numb.

Like a ghost watching.

A coma.

Alive, but not kicking.

Can't hurt me anymore.

Your words are just that: words.

It doesn't matter.

Nothing does.

Numb.

Somebody pinch me.

Nope, nothing once again.

Go ahead, make it hurt.

Can't do it, can you?

Then she closed her eyes and turned away.  
I felt pain like never before.  
Can't feel hate, can't feel love.  
Can't touch the sky without risking the fire.

Go ahead, pinch me.  
OW!  
Damnit!  
Thank you.  
Thank you for the pain.  
For without pain, there could be no pleasure.  
Without loss— no gain.

Wake up to the world.  
Taste the pain.  
It takes a little dying to appreciate a little living.  
Rebirth of the soul.  
*Now feel this...*

**Author's Note**

3-11-96

10:13.30 P.M. to 10:57.21 P.M.

[ This is from the original "Best of" compilation ]

It's getting late once again, and I should probably let you get back to whatever you were doing before you started reading this. It's been eight long years (approximately) since I started keeping track of my writings. From my first freshman crush to my present day working class living, it's all been recorded for you. It wasn't too hard to trim the whole book down into this 150 page compilation— what I thought was worth being read or moderately insightful into me or my beliefs made it in here, as well as some of my more private moments that might explain some of my travels in life. Since you've made it this far, you obviously thought it was worth reading, too (or you just couldn't put the damn thing down).

There really isn't all that much left to be said, it's all been said before. I hope this has been a learning experience. It's really interesting for me to look back and see a little bit of what I was thinking so many years ago. It isn't very often that you can find that touching photograph or poem, or stumble upon that high school senior annual with all your friend's pictures in it— this book is all that and more to me. I never was good at expressing myself (verbally or otherwise) so I learned to write in anger, in hope, in response to a world that didn't look me in the eye, or pay attention when I spoke up. So I get bitter sometimes, I get happy sometimes, too, so don't worry about little ol' me. It's hard to get in touch with what's on your inside, and all I've ever tried to do is speak my mind.

And no, it's not empty... yet.

I suffered a monstrous writer's block this last year, but I'm working on breaking down that barrier, along with every other one left standing. I've gone back to writing by hand (damn computers) and typing only when I have an idea that needs to be edited while it's written. It's just another step in the process called life.

I still enjoy my illiteracy, and hope every page I write will help me to communicate better. I want to reach out and have some sort of effect on my reader with my writings. I hope that I can touch something in you and make you feel like you haven't felt in a while. I want to get across that high school and adolescence and becoming an adult is one hell of a battle in life, and if these stories don't get my point across, I don't know what will. I'm just rambling again, my Dew must be wearing off...

Thank you for reading my life.

That's what this is, and your interest validates me somewhat.

(I always wanted to say that.)

I hope you felt something besides yourself.

Feel free to distribute, I always love to be read.

**Transparent**

4-7-96

1:57.53 A.M. to the non-existent 2:07.20 A.M.

Times change and sometimes it makes us see a little more clearer. What happens in the past is often muffled or exaggerated by us being “caught up in the moment”. So what’s the verdict, you ask? I just don’t know yet. What remains to be seen is just that: remaining to be seen. After a year of stagnation, can a renewal of interest be sparked anew? Has it been too long since the words flowed so freely? Can the rust of ages be worn away with the sweet words of dreams and desires hidden behind a year of apathy and ignorance? I often ask what happens to thoughts that are not put to paper. I now believe they continue to grow and manifest themselves in our daily life, or simply evolve into newer thoughts that have a more matured nature. Maybe too much navel gazing has gotten the best of me. Maybe it’s time I set out once again to capture my “essence of the moment” through prolific writing.

I might as well start rounding up another new audience.

This might very well be the start of a very interesting ride...

**Frustration**

5-16-96

10:19.28 P.M. to 10:34.38

The wind blows down the streets and out across the open lot.  
I don't remember what brought me (us) here.  
I just know that the wind is cold and the night is long.  
Memories rise like bad souvenirs from some other life.  
Nothing brings frustration like happy times so lost in the past.  
What left them (us) there?  
The moon is full and bright like I (we) used to be.  
Waxing, then waning, but it always seems to grow again.  
It seems all we ever do is grow apart.  
Day after endless day.  
Night after sleepless night.  
Why is it that the only things we had left to say had to be yelled?  
And that the only way to stop was to slam a door and walk away?  
I guess no one wins again, today.

**Sunday Morning**

3-17-96

11:46.32 A.M. to 12:24.57 P.M.

I never knew your name, but I'll never forget you.  
I walked in solitude, but you were always there with me.  
I walked aimlessly, but it's your road that sets me free.  
I'm a lost and trembling little child without you.  
I can't imagine living my life without you.  
I feel your reassurance with every step I take.  
I feel your guidance with every choice I make.  
You're my strength through every fear.  
You're my hope through every tear.  
I see your reflection in every teacher,  
every fireman who rescues another life,  
every doctor who helps to heal,  
and in every newborn's eyes.  
You're every robin that signals the start of spring,  
every breeze that lets kites soar,  
every rain for farmer's crops,  
every sunny day of summer.  
We come closer through the waters of baptism and confirmation.  
You provide the bond for a wedding celebration.  
There's an obvious attraction to your word.  
When you called for me, I'm glad I heard.  
You've shown me peace, and have so much to give.  
You let me love and you taught me to live.  
Thank you, Jesus, for taking the time,  
to care for this wayward soul of mine.



**Telephone Booth**

8-6-96 7:55.30 P.M. to 8:07.24 P.M.

I saw an angel once  
the devil struck her down  
    red fire flew from his eyes  
    the light faded from hers.

I saw a baby once  
life has done its damage  
    left her tired and alone  
    last bus to Buffalo.

I saw a dreamer once  
who cares just what is real  
    humming a nameless tune  
    looking past the sunset.

I saw an angel once

---

**Eleven Roses**

8-19-96 11:07.33 P.M. to 11:15.22 P.M.

Eleven roses  
    litter the floor next to the  
    broken vase.

A single drop  
    of blood from an angry thorn protecting its  
    pretty flower.

A hundred memories  
    rush through my head as I pursue my  
    anxious lover.

A couple friends  
    never took the time to expose the  
    hidden sin.

A single man  
    is all I am as I stand before her with my  
    broken heart.

---

**Upon the Roadside**

8-16-96 12:09.36 A.M. to 12:22.31 A.M.

It's a fact

FEAR.

troubled feelings  
twisted perceptions

vertigo

aching

churning

like the dulled eyes of a whore

with the wide-eyed gasp of an innocent's first taste of  
sin

let it in

mingling

tingling

devil demon lover

pleasures discovered

lost confusion for future

unknown

escaping

identity of self

destroying

identity of pride

curled up naked deep inside

darkened room

deepest night

once again,

fright.

August morn

walking through the woods littered with dead leaves

unwelcome visitor

blade to the jugular

perspiration dripping down my face  
anger  
aggression  
degradation  
pontification  
crucify the motherless son  
forgive the sins  
wallow in the seven deadly  
    crossed fingers  
    hoping to die  
fly free, soul  
fly free, soul  
    Winter's chill  
    snow  
    buried wasteland  
safe solitude  
null attitude  
shotgun embrace  
powder stings the taste  
story ending  
    over  
    done  
    lost in the shuffling procession of fools.  
    wayside lover  
    virgin territory  
and a look of curious  
    desire  
for the  
    feeling so needed  
    yet  
    so unknown...

**Then Reality Sets In**

8-19-96

11:16.37 P.M. to 11:25.26 P.M.

Let my hands speak to you with a language thought  
lost to your body since the lusting of teenage desires.  
Let me wrap you in my arms and hold you like a  
boa encircling food for his aching belly.  
Let me break you from your life of the boring  
repetitiveness of work sleep work sleep work.  
Let me take you to the edge.  
Let me push you to the floor and make you  
remember what it feels like to be wanted, desired.  
Let me hold you when we're through to get your  
head-heart and body-heart beating as one rhythm.  
Let me love you.  
Let me discover you.  
Let me empower you.  
Let me devour you.  
Let me into your dreams.  
Let me under your skin.  
Then cry when I walk away.

**Full Circle**

8-19-96

11:28.00 P.M. to 11:34.49 P.M.

Cradle to Grave

Night to Day

Love to Hate

Spend the night under the stars.

Watch the world come

full circle.

Hate to Love

Day to Night

Grave to Cradle

Watch the world come

full circle.

Friend to Lover

Child to Adult

Living to Dead

Spend the day under the sun.

Watch the world come

full circle.

Dying to Live

Adult to Child

Lover to Friend

Funny how things turn out

like they started way back when...

A Tension Span

**Atlas Buckled**

8-26-96 12:41.56 A.M. to 12:59.11 A.M.

The nursing home is growing faster  
    than my old high school.  
They say things are a 'changing—  
    I wonder who they're trying to fool.  
Time is passing so fast— newborn to old;  
    But I refuse to go silently with my story untold.

Whoever said wishes last forever  
    never counted on his sweetheart growing cold.  
And whoever believed in freedom  
    ignored his future happiness being bought and sold.  
Hooray for the working-class hero—  
    with broken hopes, standing before a shattered mirror,  
    holding a bloody fist, regretting chances missed...

Faces change so quickly as life goes on,  
    and the moon still watches over us from dusk 'til dawn.  
The American Dream and apple pie  
    can't disguise the truth we all deny.  
But with you in my arms I know we can make it.  
    Love erases the pain as fast as the world creates it.

Whoever said wishes last forever  
    never counted on his sweetheart growing cold.  
And whoever believed in freedom  
    ignored his future happiness being bought and sold.  
Hooray for the working-class hero—  
    with broken hopes, standing before a shattered mirror,  
    holding a bloody fist, regretting chances missed...

**A Wish Upon A Falling Star**

10-15-96

10:25.50 P.M. to 10:39.41 P.M.

A crystalline reflection

of my eyes unfocused— lost direction.

Open the door, what do I find?

a path so hard— friends left behind.

Autumnal solstice with waning sun

who knows what will pass before destiny is done?

All I ask is who will care

if wishes spoke and dreams would dare?

And who would shed a tear and cry

if my star fell from the sky?

A burning chill runs through my veins

cold and hard like summer rains.

As present and past seem so blurred

the future is still not assured.

I wait for an end to winter's sting,

watching for the first sign of a dawning spring.

But all I ask is who will care

if wishes spoke and dreams would dare?

*And who would shed a tear and cry*

*if my star fell from the sky?*

**Learning to Fly**

12-9-96 10:40.48 P.M. to 10:57.31 P.M.

I see the present turned into the past.  
Pictures, words, sands in an hourglass.  
I knew a girl once,  
    a woman twice,  
    a lover who closed the door,  
    and said not one word more.  
I stand before the dawning sun.  
Hearing echoes of the words that made us one.  
I had a friend once,  
    a hero twice,  
    a brother who closed the door,  
    and said not one word more.  
I watch the sun reach from horizon to sky.  
And can only wonder why we both said good-bye.  
I had a goal once,  
    a chance twice,  
    a choice that closed the door,  
    and whispered, "not one word more..."  
I feel the darkness of another sunset.  
Strengthen my resolve not to give up just yet.  
I see the present turned into the past.  
I awake.  
I remember.  
I cry.  
I laugh.  
I love.  
I breathe.  
I feel.  
I do all of this for you.



**Juxtaposition**

12-12-96

6:53.22 P.M. to 6:58.07 P.M.

I'm watching and learning

Every experience at my fingertips

at the edge of my sight

on the tip of my tongue

wrapped up in my imagination

pushing on

pulling towards

what happens at the edge of flesh and fantasy?

dream reality

really dream

see the shades of blue and reds

swim in the sea of purples

rising majestically to reach the emerald sky

release the shackles of belief

stand before the awe

and be awed

walk the miles in solitude

whistle a tune with no name

I asked a question of place and time

No answer came

but I understood what it meant anyway

**TV Generation**

2-8-97

8:06.28 P.M. to 8:13.32 P.M.

TV Generation

Degeneration.

I closed my eyes and disappeared back into the forest.

Eyes question

with words on lips pursed to kiss

and say

with feelings the emotions lost in todays.

I lingered on the thought of a love past.

A look

A single question of place and time

A single statement of loss and regret.

Lost at sea

Adrift on the wonder of what could have been

But years of neglect have let the ashes of burned bridges

burn cold.

[ Ignited passion on an endless night ]

A warm embrace from a new face

an old emotion from a far off place.

I closed my eyes and disappeared back into the forest.

Leaving only footprints to mark my passing.

**Under my skin**

2-28-97

8:13.17 P.M. to 8:21.24 P.M.

We all have our ways of dealing with grief.  
Pass on the loss.  
Empty holes where faces once roamed.  
“Give me what’s underneath,”  
she whispered of the body beneath the sheet.  
The sunset came and went, ignorant of our wishes.  
Out of our grasp.  
So beyond our control we let it eclipse our vision.  
“Give me what’s underneath,”  
the wise, the dreamers, the lovers,  
    asked of the stars  
    that shone brightly  
    in the night sky.  
She took my hand and we passed the night away.  
An unexpected bliss where I had kept  
    a hard resolve.  
A feeling needed so desperately in the past,  
    so casually in disregard,  
    so passionately in its hidden secrecy.  
“Give me what’s underneath,”  
    she asked of me,  
“Give me what’s underneath...”

---

*Can you see death as easily as it can appreciate  
the elegance of your cooling flesh?*

A Tension Span

**Lost in Dreamland**

2-28-97 8:22.08 P.M. to 8:29.08 P.M.

Drowning.

I want to hold you tight.

Share the heaven the stars hold tonight.

I feel the solitude.

I see the desire.

The road doesn't care about its travelers.

Only the scenery catches your eyes.

Too late to turn back now.

Does the wind blow just to pass the time?

Does night exist only to taunt the day?

Play mouse to my cat.

Watch the games that mimic life all too closely.

What marks the changes in life?

The rises, the falls, but never the monotonous day-to-day  
in which we all dwell.

Open eyes yet still so blind.

Wide awake yet still lost in dreamland.

Lost in dreamland another day.

---

**Slumber's gift**

3-4-97 8:07.20 P.M. to 8:11.24 P.M.

Was it a dream or a hazy circumstance?

Years twisted into a handful of dust.

Wishes just coins tossed to the cold waters.

Another day of looking past what matters.

Another night of tossing and turning.

A whispered word on my lips.

I awake to what's beyond my grasp.

I reach out so desperately, so wholly,

...to that which is already fading from memory.

**Twisting In The Gloom**

3-17-97 7:31.01 P.M. to 7:48.37 P.M.

Oh, why?  
Would I?  
With the grin of a child  
twist in the gloom  
like a butterfly on a windy night?  
And who?  
Would I say?  
Give a care, anyway  
on a topsy turvy ride  
with a carefree soul on high?  
And how?  
Do you do?  
Politeness not quite befitting you tame shrew,  
Take my hand— take my breath away.  
And when?  
I ask you then.  
On the deck or in the den?  
With a whisper, not a care in the world.  
And what?  
Made the cut?  
Your face standing out in a crowd.  
Little shy, little loud.  
Lots of style, well endowed.  
And where?  
Do we dare?  
Stretch our emotions to the air?  
On a whim, love begins,  
when a look becomes a stare.

**No Movie Star**

3-19-97

9:00.38 P.M. to 9:12.58 P.M.

A blank screen.

Vivid whiteness.

Pushing the darkness past periphery.

I see my face on a poster.

Yet I'm not a wanted man.

I see my name in lights.

But I'm no actor.

No movie star.

Yearning to pass form and function.

Transcend this jumbled flesh and mind.

Blend ego with humility.

Meld understanding with ignorance sublime.

Awake, whole.

Standing with eyes closed before an unforgiving mirror.

Scrutinizing all the overlooked details.

Blinded by the lights.

Probing for what's beyond,

no, *behind*,

the eyes that see the truth—

but can't quite grasp all that's revealed.

Bask in the sensory waves.  
Sight and sound overpowering.  
I stare at the blank screen  
and my mind scans the credits  
no one pays attention to anyway.  
MIIM.  
Am I?  
I...  
I Am.

*Awareness encompasses the imagination  
and fuels the spirit's fire...*

**Purgatory**

4-3-97

2:55.49 P.M. to 3:17.24 P.M.

I came upon a golden gate  
after a half day's journey,  
with open sky on my left  
and a wall older than time  
eclipsing me on my right.

The gate had no lock  
and my self had no key,  
but the visions of what lay  
beyond beckoned me...

I climbed up the gate  
that would not open for me,  
but it stretched as high  
as hopes and dreams.  
And soon I tired.

I suddenly slipped and fell,  
tumbling below the gate,  
down through the clouds  
like luck slices fate,  
'til the ground embraced me.



## Hoarse Latitudes

I arose before a smoky gate  
with howls raging from within  
from devils demons martyrs  
basking in the fruits of sin.  
And soon I wearied.

The gate had no lock  
and my self had no key,  
but the visions of what lay  
beyond beckoned me...

I climbed it seems  
for an unending eternity,  
and as day became night  
and night became day,  
I stood where the middle ground lay.

It seemed a good place  
after all this time to roam,  
to settle down in this world  
in a place I could call home.

The gate had no lock  
and I needed no key  
and the visions of what lay  
beyond welcomed me...

**Leap of Faith**

4-5-97

1:51.24 A.M. to 3:01.45 A.M.

Even though the fear consumed him  
he kept running  
tripping through the forest  
trying to get away.

Pursuit

nipping at his heels.

His heart was racing.

The sweat on his forehead  
and dripping down his back.

The faces in the mirror  
breathing down his neck.

He reached a clearing  
and tumbled to a stop  
at the edge of a canyon  
with a thousand foot drop.

He closed and opened his eyes  
and turned around

to see the bright eyes

of the wolves

lining the horizon

and he fell exhausted to the ground.

The howling rose to a fever pitch  
as the wolves burst into the clearing

only to find the man leaping

still determined to

choose his own death.

**Wild Horses**

4-17-97

11:46.55 P.M. to 11:59.09 P.M.

Can you hear it?  
Do you feel it?  
*Do you want it deep inside?*  
Can you taste it?  
Do you crave it?  
*Do you need it deep inside?*  
Like a tidal wave crashing  
I'm knocking on your door.  
Like a shotgun blasting  
I've got you burning for more.  
Are you hanging like an apple  
waiting for me to get to the core?  
'Cause when the lights go out  
It's time to even the score.  
Do you want to rock, spring it on 'em,  
you know I don't just fiddle.  
She likes it on top, and the bottom,  
and a whole lot in the middle.  
Can you hear it?  
Do you feel it?  
*Do you want it deep inside?*  
Leave you breathless,  
tired and restless,  
*After an hour's long ride.*

**She cried**

4-19-97

11:21.09 P.M. to 11:26.37 P.M.

It seemed so familiar.  
A face I held so tightly once.  
A body I held too close.  
A love I clung to.  
A name I whispered.  
And I whispered no more  
except when I cried  
at night  
and sometimes in the day.  
A shower in spring.  
The angel drenched.  
Lightning crashes  
as I said hello  
to someone I once said goodbye.  
And a sense of loneliness  
is replaced  
by a sense of regret  
for times missed  
and a waste of anger  
on an innocent subject.  
*And I cried.*  
*And she cried.*

**Grasping at Straws**

4-19-97

11:27.06 P.M. to 11:32.46 P.M.

I can feel it.

Sarcasm scalds the impressionable child.

*Am I evil?*, he asked

of the impulse to hurt

to chain

to suppress.

Of darkest recesses

the evil dwells and haunts

the naïve soul's burden of doubt.

*Am I evil?*, he asked

of the bloody blade

the blackened eye

the bruise he doesn't remember getting.

Hold on

a voice whispered

as he fell to the ground

clutching his chest.

Black heart.

Choking lungs.

Awash in self-inflicted pain...

mutilating

debilitating

sapping his strength as he fought to hold on.

Hope...

is a delusion of the weak.

**Nocturnal Omission**

5-17-97 7:32.07 P.M. to 7:39.23 P.M.

last night i had a dream  
and in that dream i saw no faces  
and no form to confuse  
with what i see all day  
in the morning i lay  
spent on grasping at the wisps  
holding the ether  
and delving into the nothing  
that seems so much like everything  
memory failed me  
at that which i tried to never forget  
and those lessons i learned  
were like dust  
and the winds of the day  
of eyes that see the world  
of eyes that cry at an innocent pain  
blew them like footprints  
to fade from yesterday  
to remember would be a bliss  
but to scrutinize might  
reveal its nature  
so amnesia is blessed  
to help make the pursuit  
more pleasing  
and hope is raised  
to push the clouds higher  
the dreams farther  
and the expectations of grandeur  
to a higher level  
i welcome the ladder of your faith  
and *I* begin to climb...

## Hoarse Latitudes

Name

8-4-97 9:12.32 P.M. to 9:22.30 P.M.

What good is a whisper?

What shapes the words from tongue to ear?

I take your hand once again.

I walk the heart's lonely path.

I embrace you.

I want to show you the little things in this world,

and glimpse the emotions

that I get when I'm lost in your grip.

You make me feel.

You let me be free.

Your embrace takes me to a safer place.

Your kiss takes me back to those teenage years.

You flirt.

You tease.

I wonder what it takes to get you beyond the hoping

and into the yearning,

and into the lusting,

into the night and on through the day.

I cry when you say goodbye.

You don't know how much your "good mornings" mean.

You make me feel alive.

I hope I make you feel the same.

I hope I can draw you nearer,

by simply whispering your name.

**A moment of contemplation**

8-6-97 4:09.13 P.M. to 4:17.48 P.M.

A wish upon a falling star.  
And that fallen star was me.  
Sometimes you can only see so far.  
And sometimes you glimpse infinity.  
What is the measure of a man?  
And who decided the scale?  
What is the pleasure of man?  
And who said it was for sale?  
The choices too tough, it seems.  
And the road of life trafficked with pain.  
Walking past the forgone dreams.  
And the tears fall down like rain.  
What gives rise to hope?  
And what chills to the bone?  
When you only act like you can cope.  
And you crumble because you're alone?

---

**Window Shopping**

5-17-97 7:27.30 P.M. to 7:31.03 P.M.

Face pressed to the glass.  
Do you yearn?  
What makes the stuff of dreams?  
What drives the stealthy serpent of desire?  
What craves the ideal?  
What denies the ingrained rules?  
What determines heroes?  
What determines fools?

---



**Vertigo**

9-6-97

11:14.50 P.M. to 11:25.59 P.M.

I may have stumbled,

but I did not fall.

With every breath I take I feel the burn.

Try to shift the focus from now to the long run.

*I may have stumbled...*

I spent my third wish to erase the pain.

Memories dull, except for those that will be forever etched in.

*...but I did not fall.*

The hourglass never lied.

Even when the drinking clouded the perception.

I may have stumbled,

but I did not fall.

I ignore the hole in my jeans and the blood on my knees.

I keep walking.

Because the only one tripping was you.

**Reminisce to a Kiss**

8-12-97 8:25.26 P.M. to 8:42.06 P.M.

I closed my eyes to hear the music better.  
It took me back to my youth.  
To a life before love and sex and decisions and consequences.  
I laughed.  
Things were so easy before.  
So clear to choose the little things and have the big things just happen.  
I just got to have faith.

*[ I wrapped my arms about her waist and kissed her neck... ]*

I talked to my grandfather the other night.  
Funny how we never talked when he was still alive.  
But I feel I can tell things to him and have it not matter.  
Or maybe really matter.  
Whether I'm just ranting about life.  
Or crying about things not going right.  
I cried that night, and his tombstone did not judge me.  
Though I judged myself.

*[ I looked into her eyes, and held her tight... ]*

I just wanted someone special to hold onto.  
But now my someone is saying goodbye.  
I just wanted something to believe in.  
But now my something is telling lies.

*[ I knelt before her naked body and pressed my lips to her belly... ]*

I woke up the other day and wondered why.  
The day was just like the day before it.  
And the next would undoubtedly be the same.  
Why bother with a Thursday that would never be missed?  
After seven years of marching in place?  
My own drummer, drowned out in a symphony.

*[ I opened my eyes and she was gone... ]*

*[ And I am left wondering if she ever... ]*

**It came to this**

8-19-97

10:28.38 P.M. to 10:38.33 P.M.

*Give me your tired, your poor...*

Close my eyes and dream no more.

You can run from your problems,

But never your self.

Hard times are ever so common,

And deaf ears hear the calls for help.

So much for good intentions,

When daily life is in contention.

I know you can see my position,

And maybe even my point of view.

But why are you acting like the competition?

Like everything is me versus you?

You said you loved me and that you care.

I'm still looking, and finding you're not there.

I don't think we asked for this.

I don't think we meant to cry.

I can't believe it came to this.

I can't believe it came to goodbye.

**Morning Comes**

8-20-97 8:11.26 P.M. to 8:17.20 P.M.

I can't believe.  
To hold you in my arms.  
A summer day  
burning in your sun  
shining down on me.  
Take me there.  
Take me anywhere.  
Lost in your eyes  
and coyish games.  
You sucker me again,  
and I blindly follow  
because I know the path,  
the path of thorns,  
I've been led down before.  
But the scenery is nice  
if you don't mind the bumpy ride  
until I get through to you.  
Get to you.  
Head over heels  
but I'm always that way  
when I'm under your spell...  
and looking in your eyes,  
and kissing you goodbye,  
good night,  
and someday,  
good morning...

**Johnny came home**

9-4-97

10:50.18 P.M. to 10:59.30 P.M.

Johnny came home  
but he couldn't leave the war behind.  
Blank stares at a family he'd missed.  
Trying to erase the visions of families he'd destroyed.  
God was calling, and it wasn't long distance.  
Death came knocking on his back door,  
but he was on the front porch,  
and he wasn't listening...  
Johnny came home  
but his heart just wasn't in it.  
Imagine the pain he felt when he,  
when he couldn't face what he had done.  
So he went walking,  
down a long and lonely road.  
Everyone was talking  
when he fell to his knees and cried,  
"I'm sorry."  
Johnny came home  
but it wasn't how he left it.  
His daughter hadn't seen him in three long years  
and he'd never met his son.  
You had to wonder why he said goodbye—  
Had to wonder if on the inside he'd die.  
Death came knocking on his back door,  
and he was listening all too well...

**Glow in the Dark**

10-1-97 8:33.28 P.M. to 8:54.13 P.M.

*So do you wanna?*

Don't you see  
this lack of intimacy  
makes a tension between  
you and me?

Emotional disorientation  
brings rise to an invitation  
to ease the troubling  
situation.

Turn the lights low.  
Let the music slow.  
Listen to the urges  
down below.

Look up to the stars.  
Leave behind the bars  
and remember why there's  
a back seat to cars.

There's no use to lie.  
Without you I'd die,  
but with you in my arms  
I can kiss the sky.

Drink your love— no sipping.  
Life's ice cream— double dipping.  
I need your love  
no kidding.

Just trying to show  
A feeling we need to know.  
Leave you basking  
in afterglow.

**Choo Choo**

10-19-97

8:41.09 P.M. to 8:53.14 P.M.

I see my life spread out before me.  
Awash in memories.  
A siren wails off in the distance.  
Life keeps on going down the tracks.  
At the station.  
On board.  
Too young to hear the conductor yell, "All aboard".  
Just along for the ride.  
The engine accelerates through adolescence.  
Then to boxcar after boxcar  
of day-to-day life.  
People stand and count the cars,  
waiting for it to pass,  
or maybe catch a ride for a little while.  
The siren draws closer.  
It's all a mystery—  
the path it takes,  
the mountains, the valleys,  
the scenery going by.  
How far away is the caboose?  
How long until the next stop?  
I stand by the tracks,  
numbly out of body,  
transfixed by the train crash.

## A Tension Span

8-21-97      8:02.36 P.M.

“I’d like to taste some of this bliss,  
by taking you to heaven with one little kiss.”

“Don’t piss off the psychotic man  
unless you want to end up  
with a full body razorblade tattoo.”

**“Do you measure a man by the success of his failures  
or the failure of his success?”**

10-23-97    11:39.47 P.M. to 11:47.08 P.M.

***“The only thing sweeter than the taste of a woman  
is mingling the taste of two.”***

“When you are faced with a solid brick wall,  
it’s time to survey your climbing skills.”

“You’ve got to live a little or you spend *all* your time dying.”

“The only thing more disappointing than waking up  
from a good dream is knowing that it will be forgotten  
before you are fully awake.”

“It rains in the summer and snows in the winter.  
Life’s like that, y’know.”

“Life takes on a whole new meaning  
when it becomes threatened.”

“Success can be measured, yet philosophy can only be debated.”



**Wing and a Prayer**

10-26-97 1:52.02 A.M. to 1:01.11 A.M.

This desire was distasteful  
and the hope was just wasteful.  
The chances were very slim  
that it would happen on a whim.  
But when you mess with fate  
you can't let your feelings wait.  
And when you cross the line  
you try not to get into a bind.  
When you let emotions loose  
you always risk the noose.  
But you have to wager the sky  
if you want your chance to fly.

---

**On The List**

11-3-97 7:01.21 P.M. to 7:34.26 P.M.

Sometimes she might tend to pretend  
that she's an Alice banned from Wonderland.  
Others pass by content to live insensitive—  
ignoring this girl's drive to survive  
and spend an eternity it seems, lost in dreams.  
Always talking on the phone, yet still alone.  
Living like a turtle in her shell— private hell.  
But give her love that matures and she's yours.  
Watch the lights go down on the town.  
In the morning she's gone duckling to swan,  
and your name is added to the list of chances missed.

---

**Life's Ice Cream**

11-5-97 8:00.10 P.M. to 8:24.44 P.M.

It was an endless sea in which we were swimming.

*And every mother's daughter was breathless.*

*And every father's son was searching.*

The waters were churning.

The sun's rays were burning.

*Nobody gave a second glance.*

**Skinny-dipping in an underwater dance.**

It was an endless day in which we were struggling.

*And every mother's daughter was teasing.*

*And every father's son was pursuing.*

The thoughts were churning.

The fires were burning.

*Nobody dared a second advance.*

**Skinny-dipping in a lover's trance.**

It was an endless night in which we were dreaming.

*And every mother's daughter was desiring.*

*And every father's son was hoping.*

The emotions were churning.

The passions were burning.

*Nobody needed a second chance.*

**Skinny-dipping in a moonlit romance.**

**Tourniquet**

11-7-97 7:03.13 P.M. to 7:15.06 P.M.

Ever climbed a mountain?  
Or sat on a beach and let the ocean lap at your toes?  
We stood in the dark and argued.  
They say it's an addiction.  
Take another drag.  
Exhale.  
Who's right?  
Just shrugging my shoulders and nodding.  
We spent too much time on the road.  
We let friendship get the best of us.  
Now it seems we're fading out.  
Does it set you free?  
Did the tie that binds strangle you in the end?  
Did loneliness make it any easier?  
Or any more necessary?  
I can't take back the words or the bad times.  
I can't draw you a perfect picture anymore.  
I put my crayons away long ago.  
You went out like you came in—  
and I never saw it coming either way.  
The two out of three I gave you shifted.  
You got what I could give:  
just band-aids on a terminal wound.

**Fortune Teller**

11-6-97 10:11.12 P.M. to 10:26.59 P.M.

I held my hands out, palms up, for the weeping lady.

She took them in hers.

“You would walk on hot coals to further the myth.

“You act so strong, especially when you’re not.

“You cry by yourself, rather than spread your grief.

“You bottle your emotions to avoid something.

“What?”

“*Myself.*” I replied.

Raised eyebrows her only acknowledgment.

“You take control when you can’t win, so failure is an achievement.

“You set yourself up for a fall.

“You dwell on things you just can’t change.

“You hate to think you might die old.

“Why?”

“*I’m just a blink in some greater observation.*” I replied.

She looked away, and continued on.

“Why don’t you accept your limitations?

“How can you let others continually take advantage of you?

“What is it going to take to turn your life around?

“Where did things go wrong?

“When are you going to learn to live?

“Who is going to set you free?”

“*Myself, all in good time, my dear.*” I replied,

“*Someday my reflection won’t scare me,*

*and my anger won’t control me,*

*and my decisions won’t leave me bruised,*

*and my wishes might start coming true.*

*But until that day I am all that I am—*

*everything you told me was true,*

*and everything you told me I already knew.”*

**Rise and Shine (Sheila II)**

11-13-97 8:02.10 P. M. to 8:14.58 P.M.

The sun still managed to come up.  
Sheila whispered good morning to another lover.  
Her last doing eight to ten for something he'd said.  
Sheila made some toast and eggs.  
Her mind drifted to a summer she'd tried to forget,  
and a child she'd lost to some bureaucrat's best intentions.  
It didn't take much to understand her pain,  
and it didn't take much to ease her grief.  
She was just looking for someone to hold her,  
someone to tell her everything would be all right.  
The guy in bed wouldn't be the one.  
The next face probably wouldn't be, either.  
Sheila has to look out for herself, in a world out for blood.  
She remembered what her father had told her,  
even when she was too drunk to resist.  
"No man will be good enough for my baby."  
She had to laugh at the truth.  
The smell of burning toast brought her back to breakfast.  
Orange juice completes the meal.  
She whispers to her lover to wake up.  
He smiles at her offering, and consumes her food,  
like he consumed her body last night.  
She laughed at the thought.  
It was funny the number of men who had made her who she was,  
a wife in a girlfriend's tight dress.  
Her mother smiled back at her in the mirror.  
What place does regret have in everyday life?  
It's the trip, not the destination, she reassures herself.  
This morning she takes another step on that journey.  
This morning she still has such a long ways to go.

Chasing Sunsets (Life Goes On)

11-17-97 12:12.27 P.M. to 12:20.58 P.M.

Before I met you,  
I thought I knew love.  
*But I was just chasing sunsets,  
missing out on the stars in the heavens above.*

I'll never forget our wedding day.  
Or the tears you had in your eyes  
when your daddy gave you away.  
Those were tears of joy you couldn't disguise.  
And I realize that you're gone.  
*But life goes on.*

You showed me how to live—  
and when I was at the end of my rope  
you kept me from crawling deep inside,  
when I didn't know how to cope.  
And I realize that you're gone.  
*But life goes on.*

Before I met you,  
I thought I knew love.  
And yeah, I was just chasing sunsets,  
missing out on the stars in the heavens above.  
*And I realize now that you're gone,  
that they were shining all along...*

## Alexithymia

### Color

11-18-97 11:03.52 P.M. to 11:11.58 P.M.

“I used to think love was a matter of  
    Black and White,  
but you showed me that it was a wonderful  
    Rainbow.  
After we burned through all the shades of  
    Red,  
we ended up lost in the many hues of  
    Blue.  
Now that I’m blind, I stumbled over the pot of  
    Gold,  
and only in memories can I appreciate the beauty of the missing  
    Color.”

---

### Have you ever?

11-15-97 12:55.48 P.M. to 12:29.55 P.M.

Have you ever said anything you didn’t mean?  
Or did something you knew you’d regret?  
Have you ever broken a heart on a whim?  
Or chose to walk away rather than face the pain?  
Have you ever looked into someone’s eyes,  
only to fear what you felt inside?  
Have you ever felt like letting go,  
when you’re curled up tight so deep inside?  
Have you ever?  
Have you ever walked into the rain?  
Have you ever?  
Have you ever closed your eyes to the pain?  
Have you ever?  
*And will you ever feel the same?*

---

**Chin Up**

11-22-97 11:35.43 P.M. to 12:06.17 A.M.

***“I know it’s late,  
but I have a few things I needed to get off my chest.”***

I’ve spent the last ten years of my life looking at myself and those around me, trying to figure out how it all comes together. I’ve seen happiness and I’ve seen sadness, triumph and tragedy. I don’t know much about this world, except that it’s big enough that I will never see it all, nor touch enough of the brave souls that are struggling to make it like I am. I am but one of the masses, yet I still need to be heard.

*“We all have natural abilities and acquired skills  
and we should use them to further ourselves and others.”*

Greed has always been our downfall, and humankind will suffer it again and again until we learn from our mistakes. The world is not in need of a handout, it is in search of a better tomorrow. I don’t know if that’s world peace or a better mouse trap, but I know as long as there is hunger there will need to be food, and as long as there is disease we will search for the cure.

*“Right now, somebody you know is sitting in the dark,  
and they’re lonely.”*

I don’t have the answers, I just have more questions. Questions like: why are we still fighting? Wars have brought about the evolutionary changes necessary to get us democracy, now why can’t we expand that ideal a little bit more? Why can’t we concentrate on making our children smarter, our jobs more rewarding, and our retirement years something we’re prepared for? Why can’t we raise the standard of living for all people, not just the upper class? Who do I have to convince that there is a drug problem in the country so that something can be done about it? We know all about death and taxes, now what about inner peace and well-being?



*“You breathe without consciously willing it, but by the same token,  
a drowned man cannot will himself to breathe again.”*

It’s funny how the cities are littered with bars and churches— ways to escape the pain by drowning our sorrows or forgiving our sins. I see more car washes, yet our schools have to decide which courses to cut from their curriculum. I read reports every day from a man who cannot spell, and can only wonder where the system went wrong. I don’t know why such a simple thing like making change is hard for so many cashiers. Why are there so many minimum wage jobs that demand so much work, yet are meant to hold one back from climbing any higher?

*“I wake up every morning and go to sleep every night.  
Life is that simple at times.”*

There is so much left in my life that the possibilities for tomorrow and next week are endless, yet I will probably do the same thing as last week. Why is it so difficult to break the cycle? I will never again be eighteen, nor twenty-three much longer. I fear that I will look back and wonder why I didn’t do more, or question what I couldn’t bring myself to do any earlier. I guess they call it growing up. Nobody said it would be easy.

*“The rain will never erase the tears  
we’ve accumulated through the years.”*

You question your feelings, or maybe deny them at times, but if you refuse to act you refuse to live. You hold onto your anger, you hold onto your fears— somehow knowing that they make you vulnerable, but you are unable to deal with them any other way. Sometimes letting go is the only solution. Sometimes you have to reach out to others to dissipate your angers and fears, hoping that you can draw strength from them. I have reached out to many people through the years, and I thank the few who still remain to set me straight, and head me back into the world with my chin up...

**Escape**

11-25-97

7:58.32 P.M. to 8:07.54 P.M.

Like the masses, I sit.

Who do you worship?

*Images and words.*

The faces blur in a jumble of history in pictures.

We've become a nation of fools.

Our developmental stages classified by years, not accomplishments.

1997 is just a number.

It is a measure of a span of time.

Does it matter what happened January to December?

Or does a shift in attitudes belie the calendar's set borders?

One fourth of a year

is just a part of the bigger picture.

Can you deny what you think, what you feel,

what you see as yourself?

Does self-image have a place in this world?

Just a two minute blurb on the evening news.

More time is spent on the weather than the Nobel Prize.

And more people know who won the game

than who's joining the alma mater.

But does any of it matter?

You can Question Everything.

You can scrutinize every detail.

You can pick apart the hypothesis and dwell on the suppositions.

But can you draw conclusions in crayons?

Can you fly inside your own head?

Do you have wings or chains?

At night in our dreams we are all equal in the eyes of god.

In the day, we are all equal in the eyes of the law.

When I wake up, *I escape the dream.*

When I drift off to sleep,

*I escape the nightmare...*

## A Tension Span

11-25-97 8:20.33 P.M. to 9:56.54 P.M.

(a stroll down memory lane is so time consuming)

I would like to thank my parents for letting me decide who I am.  
My sister, for being a little more understanding  
than I used to give her credit for.

My grandparents, for being the history I can learn from.

Tammy, for letting me share our best years,  
and for weathering the traumatic times.

Ardis, for letting me share my feelings,  
and keeping me warm those few nights.

Tami, for getting me started on writing to explain my feelings.  
Bloomfield High School, for teaching me lessons  
both during and after school.

Duane Wilken, for being a coach who could wring out  
my adrenaline for the last 100 yards.

Mr. Neuharth, for furthering my interest in music.

Mrs. Brooks, for giving me B's and C's on my English papers.

Roger Carpenter, for getting me into computers.

Jim Cripe, for being an ass to us students—  
we really needed that dose of reality.

Robin Reed & Mr. Kenkel, for getting me into science,  
and exploring my world.

Mr. Fil, for the free reign of home room in high school.

The SAT and ACT tests, for setting me up for a fall.

The Bloomfield AnW group, for letting Shawn & me DJ dances  
in Jr./High school.

Nike Air Pegasus shoes and the Kamikaze hat,  
for my fashion sense in high school.

The Cross Country experience, for challenging me.

The TEK and SENTRY camps,  
for getting me out of my shell for a while.

Richard Garriot (and his Ultima series of role playing games),  
for pushing me past myself.

Marvel Comics, for giving me adventure in my childhood.

Piers Anthony, Terry Brooks, and L. Ron Hubbard,  
for being excellent storytellers.

## Alexithymia

John Feaster, for the book of quotations.  
Brian Tinkham, for the years of friendship, and the Atari.  
Mr. Jason Fricke, for playing the trap set better than I.  
Jeff Carpenter, for challenging my imagination.  
Scott Schroeder, for thinking too much,  
and for walking in on me & Tammy (*sorry!*)  
Ralph Dempsay, for driving me home that night.  
Chris Archer, for putting me on a saw,  
and then advancing me off it.  
Lisa & Rhonda & Bonita & everyone else at BeefAmerica,  
for reading my stuff at work.  
Margaret, for the kiss I can't forget.  
Bob Kumke, for being someone to look up to  
when I needed heroes.  
Greg Kearns, for talking about anything those years.  
The YABBS members, for listening to me rant  
while I was at Wayne State.  
Cammi, for not letting me try marijuana.  
Judge Garden, for two years of probation instead of jail time.  
Dale, for sending me to a shrink.  
Society, for making me need one.  
Bard's Tale III, for making me the Thief of Fate.  
And Mountain Dew, for all the sleepless nights and depressions  
it has helped me to endure.

I thank my disciples the most, and although my praise of them is already mentioned individually in Navel Gazing, I have to say again, *thank-you* for encouraging me, letting me touch your lives, opening up to me, and seeing me through all the years we had together.

*I will never forget you or what you have helped me to become.*  
**I love you all.**

I have been dreading this page for the last five years. I am a superstitious sort, and when I wrote my will back in the fall of '92, I said that I would have my book published when I hit 500 pages or died, whichever came first. I had this sneaky premonition that they would happen at about the same time. I'm still crossing my fingers and hoping that I will wake up tomorrow, not get into a car crash, nor commit suicide any time soon.

What does all this mean? Well, that's entirely up to you. This book has been my personal history of the last ten years of my life. Early on in my writings I was told that girls have diaries and guys have journals and black books. This is my journal, and hopefully I can get a black cover for it. The earliest story in here that I can verify the date of is the Red Reaper story, from April 8th of 1988. I have found that I write my most profound works in the first weeks of April, and in the month of November. I assume it has had something to do with my mind getting into shape creatively during the school years, but for the last few years I guess it's just been out of habit.

It wasn't until recently that I noticed that I've only been writing poetry the last couple of years. I plan on changing this in my future writings, in an attempt to fill out my writing capabilities and better explore my creativity. I like looking back on how my style has developed, and how my attitudes have matured somewhat. I am still a child— a very cynical child at times, but a child nonetheless. I would like to drag out my innocence more often, but this world has a problem with naïveté, and takes advantage of me when I'm not looking.

I hope that my writings have made you question something— like how you feel about something or someone, or make you wonder what was going through my head when I wrote something. It's a terribly intriguing world that we live in, and even the most trivial thing like a cicada's song in the fall can catch my attention. I hope that you will take a closer look at the world around you and the people who you are interacting with, and think about what you're doing with and to them. Are you being as open and as good as you can be? Are you going to get a toy or a lump of coal come Christmas? (Personally, I should have a lifetime supply for bar-be-cues for as bad as I've been on occasion.)

---

## Alexithymia

I would like to say again, thank-you to all those who have stood with me, and I'm sorry for those of you I have wronged throughout the years. I have a few friends left, and I think that I should get together with them more often. I have been guilty the last few years of being ashamed of what I've done and said and been through. That's behind me now. I am only human, and subject to emotions and dreams and love and mistakes. Sometimes they all get rolled into one, and they call that one thing *life*.

*Thank-you, for making it this far.* What you have in your hands is what I have in my head. My words have always calmed me, and later, after the pain, they have offered me insight into what I was feeling. I have felt many things throughout the years. I would like to think that I have learned from this, and hope that you have learned something as well. I wanted to wrap this up with something profound, so here it is:

*"We have crossed paths in our travels, and in doing so we have walked together for a time. We may have held an uneasy alliance, were ignorant of our shared experience, or maybe walked hand in hand. I leave you now, and let fate decide whether or not our paths shall meet again,*

*or if we have separate sunsets to chase,  
and different dreams to pursue."*

**Jonathan Grimm**      10:49.50 P.M.      November 25, 1997

**Birthday Poem**

12-7-97 10:08 P.M.

*Tonight it's all for you...*

Let the music caress your ears  
like I caress the back of your neck.  
Let the moonlight coming through the window  
reveal all that we've been keeping inside.  
Let the silk of the sheets  
slide against your silky skin.  
Let the taste of your lips  
linger on mine once again.  
Let my arms wrap around your body  
to hold you so tight.  
Let my hands run through your hair  
and not stop just there.  
Let me know how you want it  
so I can do everything right.  
Let me know how you need it  
so I can love you all night.  
Let my warm breath  
warm your soft skin.  
Let my hands trace your body  
to get to know you better.  
Let me give you a night of fantasy  
something you can always remember.  
Let my thoughts of you  
turn into dreams come true...



Windmills

1-7-98 2:28.06 A.M. to 2:38.01 A.M.

Windmills

spinning round and round.

I keep on walking my way out of town.

A class ring clenched in my fist

and a young girl on my mind.

I remember what she whispered

and that look in her eyes.

I can see what she's wanting,

what she's been keeping inside.

I know she's been hurt before—

good intentions for a boy who's too wild.

But I'm not about that.

No hit-and-run.

No one night stand.

I stand before the sunset

with an oath on my lips:

To never hurt the ones I've loved,

even after she's walked away.

---

“**Love** is a luxury of the innocent,  
so sought after by the scorned,  
so elusive to the jealous,  
so all-encompassing to those enthralled,  
so fulfilling to those who were once so lonely...”

**Bell Curve**

12-16-97 12:54.04 A.M. to 1:06.21 A.M.

- They taught you to **add two plus two**  
when you should've learned *to solve all the problems.*
- They taught you to **imitate**  
when you should've learned *to create.*
- They taught you to **watch**  
when you should've learned *to observe.*
- They taught you to **listen**  
when you should've learned *to speak out.*
- They taught you to **be realistic**  
when you should've learned *to hope.*
- They taught you to **take the loss**  
when you should've learned *to make the best of the situation.*
- They taught you to **criticize**  
when you should've learned *to make things better.*
- They taught you to **recognize failure**  
when you should've learned *to acknowledge progress.*
- They taught you to **blame**  
when you should've learned *to resolve.*
- They taught you to **depend**  
when you should've learned *to be self-sufficient.*
- They taught you to **attempt**  
when you should've learned *to succeed.*
- They taught you to **fit in**  
when you should've learned *to stand out.*
- They taught you to **accept**  
when you should've learned *to dream.*
- They taught you to **climb**  
*when you should've learned to fly...*

**Hypothetical Question**

1-24-98

11:43.06 P.M. to 11:52.38 P.M.

Where is the line drawn?  
And when do you turn the page?  
Starve the body to better see the soul.  
Watch the room blur,  
then grow all too clear.  
Wear the scarred pride  
like a badge,  
not a scarlet letter.  
I lived the past  
and it took its toll on me.  
I still breathe  
when I laugh,  
when I cry,  
when I'm careless or careful.  
It's dark outside  
and darker still  
on the inside.  
Step into the water.  
*Does it make you wet?*  
I'm just asking because I need to know.  
If I questioned,  
what would you know?

**A Gift of The Flesh**

1-20-98 8:23.04 P.M. to 8:35.36 P.M.

*I'm dreaming about you again.*

I run my hand through my hair  
and imagine tracing your ears  
with my fingers then grasping  
your hair as my lips come to  
yours, which come to mine.

*I see your eyes  
and in them I see  
your desire.*

***A desire matched by mine.***

I pull you close to me to  
feel your breasts push against  
my chest and my hands  
about your waist and your  
heart in my head.

*I want to leave you tired  
and naked in my bed.*

Too tired to sleep, too content to move...

I'd be nursing a sore leg  
from an attempt to perform  
a move fit for a gymnast  
trying to push  
harder and deeper, driven by  
a desire

to make you come hard.

I want to wrap you in my arms  
like I want to get wrapped up  
in your legs.

*I need an excuse to get you alone.*

I need a reason to show you  
everything.

***And give you more.***

**Refuse to Think**

1-25-98

12:41.44 A.M. to 12:56.14 A.M.

**Focus.**

Ever realize that everything is how you see it?

How you smell it?

How you hear it?

How you taste it?

How you touch it?

And just as importantly,

How you think it?

You can ignore it all you want,

but you mind records what your senses perceive.

Your senses mingle to grant you awareness.

When you refuse to touch,

    you miss out on the texture, soft or rough.

When you refuse to taste,

    you waste away from starvation.

When you refuse to hear,

    you miss out on the music, as well as the noise.

When you refuse to smell,

    you deny perfume its power.

When you refuse to see,

    you are dreaming or lost in the dark.

When you refuse to think,

    you are dead.

**Perfect World of Mine**

1-25-98

11:57.14 P.M. to 12:08.18 P.M.

I've always wanted to ride a train,  
but I've never had a reason to.

I've always wanted to see the ocean,  
and when I finally did,

*I knew it would be a long time before I'd see it again.*

I've always wanted to chase the sunset,  
but it grew dark each night so I went home.

I've always wanted to mean more,  
but my words are just letters on a page.

I've always wanted to live a fantasy,  
but luck and hormones are never both plentiful.

I've always wanted to take you in my arms,  
but you're unaware of my desires,

*and this is no perfect world of mine.*

**Dwell on Today**

2-7-98 3:40.43 P.M. to 3:45.41 P.M.

In this world...

what have I seen?

*I closed my eyes and dove into the water.*

Was there a hand to reassure me?

A kind face to steer me back to home?

**There was all this and more.**

The stars winked at me in my folly.

Or was it to light my way?

No fog on my horizon.

No clouds on this sunny day.

It might have been a prayer or a plea.

Either way I made it through another day.

Tomorrow still calls me forward.

Even when I tend to dwell on today.

---

**Come no closer**

2-5-98 1:24.14 A.M. to 1:31.50 A.M.

I saw the prom queen crying. "Come no closer," she whispered from the window of some boyfriend's car. And I could only wonder what could take a beauty and make her cry. What could take years of friendship and make it die. I took her hand and we danced in the parking lot for hours it seemed, but only for a few minutes in reality for her boyfriend returned with some food in hand. He told me to go away. "Come no closer," I whispered as I made a fist, and returned his unwanted advances upon this innocent girl with a punch to his chin. He left in frustration. The prom queen kissed me and then walked away. She said sometimes trust and friendship are sometimes better when they are like planets that almost collide, yet come no closer. I cried over falling stars, and they matched the tears in her eyes over unfulfilled expectations and missed chances.

---

**Under Construction**

1-25-98

1:26.12 A.M. to 1:53.08 A.M.

**I let music be the window to my soul.**

Children grow older.

**Evolution is a process.**

I have walked many, many miles.

**The movie screen is a reflection of dreams.**

The moon does not shine- it only reflects.

**It takes more light to see color than black and white.**

Even the animal called man can be hypnotized by headlights.

**Freedom is never free.**

Chains are physical, limitations are mental.

**Dinosaurs aren't extinct, they are chickens.**

Why do we feel that simply touching greatness  
will diffuse some to us?

**Violence is a means to an end— all of ours.**

If a photograph can steal your soul,  
does a video camera suck your spirit dry?

**Can religion ease the pain?**

Lost arts might help us appreciate our past... and future.

**More time should be spent on massage.**

Why does the world cater to the maniacal  
and those who have lost their drive?



**It is the possibility of going over the edge  
that forces our growth.**

Pleasure and boredom are too often the excuses for violence.

**Maybe we should build less bridges and learn how to swim.**

Could understanding help us escape from ignorance?

**How do our feet know where the next step is?**

We haven't explored enough of our world,  
our bodies, or our minds.

**Against all odds, I dream in color.**

When you fight to the death, you must be prepared to be killed.

**The road less traveled has more dead ends  
and is usually under construction.**

**Your Lover's Name**

1-29-98

7:01.42 P.M. to 7:13.24 P.M.

**There comes a moment of understanding.**

When your heart is laid bare.

When you confess your dreams and desires.

*And they are both your lover's name.*

**There comes a time when love overwhelms.**

When your coyish advances dance with another's.

When an embrace lasts forever.

*And two hearts beat as one rhythm.*

**There comes an eternity of commitment.**

When trust has no need to be questioned.

When vows are more than a ceremony.

*And a ring stands for a life-long love.*

**There comes a moment of contentment.**

When you can both laugh about anything.

When you remember good times and make more of them.

And your lover's name is on your lips

*And always on your mind...*

**Take It To The Edge**

2-7-98

4:52.39 P.M. to 4:58.49 P.M.

Was it everything you expected it to be?

Did the wind whip through your hair?

Did the images blur past your vision?

Was your head spinning?

Did your soul try to scream out of your skin?

*“What you gave me...”*

Did it overpower?

Was your flesh something new to devour?

Was it a slap to the face?

Did your stomach churn from a thousand foot drop?

Did your body tremble?

Did your senses reel?

Could you lose control?

Could you dare to feel?

Did you wake up with a bad taste in your mouth?

Did you feel drained to the point of being empty?

Were you ripped of everything?

Or left broken and numb on the shore?

Did you take it for granted?

***Did you ask for more?***

**Good-bye, I love you (Good-bye)**

2-5-98

1:33.29 A.M. to 1:50.38 A.M.

After seven years of friendship.  
After three and a half years of marriage.  
We were husband and wife,  
but she wasn't my friend anymore.  
The things unique to us when we came together,  
remained unique to us when we went our separate ways.  
We grew older, not together,  
and that just wasn't enough to justify staying together.  
Young love doesn't guarantee anything.  
Not one damn thing.  
I can only hope I walk away stronger,  
because I know she did.  
It may not have been the right thing to do,  
but that made it no less necessary.  
What is friendship?  
What is love?  
Where do all the regrets fit in?  
It may be that the only thing I did right as a husband  
was let her leave to be happy—  
even if it wasn't with me.  
Good-bye.  
Good luck.  
When I look back I'll see the good times,  
playing out at the park,  
and cruising in Lincoln,  
and our first apartment,  
and the songs on the radio,  
and the times we laughed,  
and our wedding day.

## Windmills

I might not see the arguments as clearly,  
not out of ignorance,  
but because the angry words and thrown food are all best left  
in the past—  
where they belong.  
Yes, I will remember how I loved you.  
Yes, I will remember how I made you cry.  
I'm sorry for what I did wrong.  
I forgive you for what happened.  
It took your leaving to get me to realize that.  
It's not that I don't care or that it doesn't matter anymore—  
maybe you did what was right and I just couldn't see it.  
I'm sorry if for the last three years I've kept you from happiness—  
I just didn't want to lose you.  
But I lost you such a long time ago.  
It just took me awhile to let you go.  
Good-bye.  
*I love you.*

Good-bye.

A Tension Span

**And Every Time**

2-14-98 5:11.14 P.M. to 5:19.50 P.M.

Every time I look up at the sky  
I wonder what it would be like to fly.  
And every time I see a pointless fight  
the newsman uses sports and the weather to end another night.  
And every time I see the unscalable wall someone's facing  
I see kids out on the open road— and they're racing.  
And every time I see someone who is lost and alone  
I hear a plea on TV for the starving— just pick up the phone.  
And every time the world gets wracked by flood and fire  
I see some new hero with a generation of kids to inspire.  
And every time I've crashed and burned on the inside  
I seem to get back up to regain my pride.  
And every time I lose direction and hope  
some friend ties a knot at the end of my rope.  
And every time I get tired of the push and shove  
I see another young couple caught up in love...

---

**Another Taste**

2-18-98 1:19.54 A.M. to 1:36.39 A.M.

I want another taste of you.  
I'll ignore the high heels and the smell of wine.  
Even when we fumble and don't know what to do.  
In the end everything works out just fine.  
We try to escape a life that's too dull.  
You make my world spin when you flirt.  
I may not be a sinner, and you're no angel.  
But you always slip on like a favorite shirt.  
I want to get lost in you some more.  
Spend more time at home, not out at the bars.  
Show you that loving is more than a score.  
Hold you in my arms and count the stars.

**I Suppose**    2-15-98    1:25.05 P.M. to 1:38.52 P.M.

How am I supposed to make love  
like I used to with you?  
And how am I supposed to say goodbye  
when I thought without you I'd die?  
And how am I supposed to not curl  
when everyone asks, "Hey, where's your girl?"  
And how am I supposed to deal  
when you're not here to help me feel?  
And how am I supposed to accept  
after all those nights we slept?  
And how am I supposed to cope  
when all I want to do is mope?  
And how am I supposed to heal  
when you say it's no big deal?  
And how am I supposed to go on  
now that you're long gone?

---

"You can change your mind but not your past."

"Love endures in the heart of a rose  
and the gleam in a woman's eyes."

"I disagree with those who say that reality is all in our heads.  
If that were the case, I would have thought you out of my life  
long ago."

"Anyone who has ever loved has known the look you give me."

---

**Just Thinking**

2-16-98 10:49.09 P.M. to 11:02.19 P.M.

*“Is it wrong to base your future on someone else’s past?”*

“I forgot to do something, and that was kiss you goodbye.”

“A thousand nightmares flash in the blink of an eye,  
and six hours of restless sleep is an eternal torment.”

“To taste a cherry is to steal a chastity belt’s key.”

**“Wisdom lasts for ages, outlived only by stupidity.”**

“Coming to terms does not guarantee forgiveness,  
only acceptance.”

**“Loss is a curse upon those who possess.”**

“Oaths and expletives are only words.”

“...Love is a sickness, requiring constant attention, bedside manners, infusions of attention, occasional vaccinations through flings or affairs, and a careful watch to make certain that it does not kill you, and even in remission, a new outbreak can be just as devastating as the previous one...”

“To a blind woman, even a black rose smells sweet;  
To a blind man, all women are beautiful.”

*“A woman’s touch has always gotten men into trouble.”*

“If only emotions were as constant as the tides.”

**“Why are we content to live unfulfilled lives?”**



Everyone Stumbles

2-22-98 12:18.29 A.M. to 12:27.37 A.M.

Another day to pass the time, bored as hell and trying not to whine. Started a little fire, trying to burn away a past that refuses to fade. Excuses maybe, but the sun still went down. Feel my heartbeat when I'm calm, feel my mind racing when I'm locked in the dark. I questioned the silent phone— it just sat there and left me alone. I hear the traffic outside my window and wonder what's passing me by. Butterflies and a masked man on the TV screen, and another day of chocolate milk, French silk, boxer shorts, quips and retorts. I try not to laugh, I try not to cry. I wonder if riding the fence is slowly making me die. No dancing in the rain, and no angels in the snow. I went for a walk and never left the living room. After twenty some odd laps I crashed on the couch. *Why is this not working?* What's the point, anyway?

Now it's dark and the only thing that's changed is the music on the stereo.

Staring at the ceiling and climbing the walls,  
*everyone stumbles, and everyone falls...*

---

"I saw lipstick on your cheek,  
and wondered who ruffled your hair.

Then I saw that girl leave, a girl I thought cared—  
Not for *you*, but for *me*.

If there's a fool in this play, I guess that's the part I'll be."

**B-Movie**

2-22-98

2:03.41 A.M. to 2:13.07 A.M.

Making movies in hotel rooms.  
Cheap wine and cheaper perfume.  
A Gideon Bible and basic cable.  
On the bed and on the table.  
Someone was taking pictures.  
Someone was skimming the scriptures.  
You wore a pretty dress.  
Acting damsel in distress.  
Wasn't there supposed to be a plot?  
Or didn't anyone give a second thought?  
Cheesy music on the radio.  
The bed creaked to an even flow.  
Was the lighting all right?  
Two in the morning or two at night?  
Too much makeup like a twelve-year-old girl.  
Some other guy gave you a whirl.  
Another blinding camera flash.  
No, baby, you're not trailer trash.  
Funny how it pays the bills.  
But your empty soul never fills.

**Shadow of the Symphony**

2-22-98

2:18.23 P.M. to 2:28.54 P.M.

Sitting at the piano trying to compose.

But I don't know how to play, or even what to say.

Found pine needles in the carpet from two Christmas's ago.

Last year had no tree from lack of need.

Now it's almost spring and still feels like fall.

Didn't miss the winter one bit at all.

The sticker said authentic wood grain finish.

Just particle board with a pretty fake cover.

We're all just good and bad chips under pressure.

Putting our authentic fake face on every morning.

Who turned the lights out on the ball in Times Square?

Another year of darkness and despair.

Hard to make sense of it all.

When it just doesn't matter at all.

Just notes scribbled on another page.

A shadow of the symphony in my head.

**What's Your Name?**

2-27-98

7:40.42 P.M. to 7:51.42 P.M.

What's your name?

Are you "happy"?

Are you "lonely"?

Are you "too polite"?

Are you "the next"?

Are you "the one left behind"?

Are you "an excuse"?

Are you "taken for granted"?

Are you "the Mister"?

Are you "the wife"?

Are you "the one on the side"?

Are you "a piece"?

Are you "a puzzle"?

Are you "lost in the shuffle"?

Are you "the one who's too loud"?

Are you "angry"?

Are you "sad"?

Are you "the boss"?

Are you "unappreciated"?

Are you "the villain"?

Are you "the victim"?

Are you "a minority"?

Are you "prejudiced"?

Are you "the name caller"?

## Windmills

### Astrologer

2-27-98 9:28.29 P.M. to 9:35.50 P.M.

I spend more time lying on the floor  
with my feet up on the couch.  
I stare at the ceiling and listen to the music.  
I wonder if I would have been born in a different age  
if I would have found myself lying in an open field,  
scanning the stars for constellations.  
Would I have made stories of the lights in the night sky?  
Your perspective of the world,  
and everything else for that matter,  
changes when you alter your point of view.  
On my knees, the world is that of a child,  
now if only I had the naïve curiosity of that age.  
Back on my feet, the world is how it always is.  
It's funny how you don't notice how close the ceiling is,  
or how far down your feet are,  
or how far away those stars are in your imagination.

---

“The birds know all too well that flight is tiring,  
and even though they take off into the wind,  
it is foolish to attempt to buck the headwind all the time,  
especially when there is often a tailwind to coast on.”

“Audacity makes stars out of assholes,  
and only martyrs made a living out of being humble.”

“In a flurry of motion I pull words from the air,  
grasping at fleeting thoughts  
which dared to make themselves known.”

**Another Restless Night**

3-1-98

12:50.24 A.M. to 12:57.10 A.M.

She talks in her sleep sometimes.

I wonder who he was  
and what he put her through.

I turn on the lights  
and take her in my arms.

I try to comfort her.

That desperate look in her eyes when they finally open—

*What can do that?*

She cries for a while.

She doesn't want to talk about it.

*She never does.*

I tell her everything is okay now.

I tell her everything will be all right.

She drifts back off to sleep.

I wish I could forget as easily.

I reach to turn the light off,  
and the last thing I notice is her white knuckles  
on the hand clenching her pillow.

**Scattered Thoughts**

3-5-98 11:20.31 P.M. to 11:29.18 P.M.

“‘*Come with me,*’ she whispered in my ear.  
We walked so far to hold each other near.”

**“Who is holding your happiness for ransom?”**

“You will never find happiness in the bottom of the bottle,  
though a little can be found by throwing one aside  
instead of down the hatch.”

“Sometimes you have to do things  
not because they really need to be done,  
but just to prove that your imagination still works.”

*“Creativity enlightens the norm.”*

“The seasons pass far too quickly for us to dwell on rainy days.”

“Alpha and Omega– the beginning and the end.”

“Even when a journey comes full circle, you must realize that  
even though you appear to be ‘back where you started’,  
you have a lot more experience than when you were there last.”

“A photograph is a memory forever.”

“Words can be erased, but their imprint remains.”

**“Everyone is a hero who can write their own history.”**

**Kindred Spirits**

3-7-98

10:00.40 A.M. to 10:10.53 A.M.

We're kindred spirits, you and I.

Proud once, now angels fallen from the sky.

You've seen my wrists, so you can't say I don't know your pain.

I've been through lonely times,

and we're getting reacquainted again.

Relationships always blooming bright, then shrinking.

Set sail on a pleasure cruise, that's suddenly sinking.

In this thing called love they say anything is fair.

But every time I get too close, I find that she's not there.

You're someone special— apart from the rest.

Not afraid to be happy, or show you're depressed.

An open door is all too often used for just passing through.

But I'm turning the knob and holding on to you.

So what if you've had trouble with those who claimed to care?

I may be just the next, or your forever, if we dare.

---

***“We're all bastards—  
some of us just have better reasons for acting that way.”***



**Come Monday Morning**

3-8-98 11:00 P.M.

Every Friday after work I go out and buy a single red rose  
to place upon the pillow beside me at night.  
By Monday morning, the rose is usually in full bloom  
as I toss it into the trash, its duty unfulfilled.  
Every so often the man at the flower shop asks,  
“*So who’s the lucky girl?*”  
I smile and reply, “*I wish I knew,*” then turn and walk away.  
“*I wish I knew,*” I say every week,  
if this will be the weekend you come to visit, and maybe stay.  
There is a rose awaiting you,  
and a love that won’t be gone come Monday morning.

---

**Wake Up**

3-22-98 9:49.03 P.M. to 9:52.06 P.M.

Follow the common thread that winds its way through all things.  
Give a tug and watch reality crumble around you.  
The walls press in.  
The mind screams for release from a skull shattered  
by banging it against the wall time and time again.  
“*Wake up,*” I scream.  
Wake up, but you never listen for you are devoid of senses.  
What good are reflexes when you aren’t allowed to feel?  
What is your response to a question  
you cannot begin to understand?  
Feel the wind blow through your hair.  
The sky grows darker as you think the night grows near,  
but you are unaware that you are just going blind.  
“*Wake up,*” I scream,  
but you are already awake,  
but just too damn far gone to care.

---

**Let's Just Be Friends**

3-11-98

3:06.04 A.M. to 3:14.30 A.M.

***I watched it all burn.***

Sitting hunched in a doorway  
to a life that's left in ruins.  
The clock on the wall—  
hands turning round and round.  
The calendar now on the floor—  
what month is it, anyway?  
Searchlights out my window.  
I reach for the doorknob.  
The outside world welcomes me  
with thunder and rain.  
I use the last of my will  
to leave this  
life of nothing  
behind,  
and to enter the storm.  
I thought I was part of something—  
but something was part of me.  
That part is gone now.  
It's up to me to choose  
to remained chained  
or  
to be free.

**QUOTE-1** (Quotes Of The Evening)

***[Acts of Love]***

3-15-98

2:05.49 A.M. to 2:45.26 A.M.

**“I forgot about how good an actor you were,  
especially when you acted like you cared.”**

“Life is more than just throwing back what’s tossed at you—  
we call that a sport.”

**“I would like to know when the guiding hand of my youth  
turned into a wagging finger of my adulthood.”**

“It would be so much easier if we said what we thought  
and did what we think is right,  
instead of having to spend so much time  
debating the details that don’t matter.”

“Trivialize the trivial, and then move on.”

“Since you don’t get a second chance very often,  
try to do it right the first time.

Failing that, screw it up bad enough  
that they have to at least let you try to fix it.”

“I have met many ugly people in my life,  
and oftentimes it is rooted in how they dealt  
with what they had been given,  
and what they have had to do without,  
but it is these same things that make beautiful,  
hopeful people as well.”

“A miracle is the acknowledgment of something good happening.”

“I try not to qualify something I’ve done as ‘a mistake’ right away, it could very well be a learning experience in progress or another means that has yet to reach the desired result— unless I’ve screwed it up the same way before, and then it’s a mistake.”

“The obvious is oftentimes overlooked  
because we demand more reasoning.”

“Assumption is the Achilles heel of those in command.”

“A locked door turns away  
both strangers and friends in the night.  
Knock loudly, my friend, as I am here for you.”

“There’s nothing like that first chance at second-guessing yourself.”

**“I’m not aspiring to walk on water,  
I’m just trying not to drown.”**

“A hand upon a woman’s cheek is a sight I sorely miss,  
almost as much as the uncorking of the desires bottled within.”

**“Act upon your love,  
or you will be forced to act from lack of it.”**

**QUOTE-2** (Quotes Of The Evening)

**[Awareness]**

**“We all just want to feel good and be entertained,  
without needing to reciprocate.”**

“When you go to bed happy, you wake up refreshed.  
When you go to bed frustrated,  
you wake up in pretty much the same condition.”

“The sky isn’t falling, we’re just realizing how close it really is.”

*“We face birth and death alone–  
it’s living that doesn’t require the solitude.”*

**“Make a wish and live your dreams,  
it’s hard to believe life otherwise.”**

“Perception is an art, as well.”

“Man needs to learn to believe in himself,  
instead of needing to create spirits and gods  
to attribute his fortunes to and blame for his misfortunes.”

“Time is linear, space is infinite, emotion provides continuity,  
while death is eternal.”

*“All the information in the world is worthless to the ignorant.”*

“Fear produces more than compliments, but not as effectively.”

“It is hard to leverage your potential growth  
considering your past inhibitions.”

*“Desire is what drives us to do the sweet and the vile.”*

***“There is nothing scarier than knowing that I exist.”***

**Heal**

4-5-98

1:57.44 A.M. to the non-existent 2:10.58 A.M.

The long day  
turned into a long night  
in a long life  
that passes by much too quickly.  
A clean slate  
like an empty plate before a starving man  
desperate to live off the fat of the land.  
I felt comforted by the words, so I listened  
for a while longer.  
“*Hold your body close to me,*” she whispered.

    Young love  
    on  
    a deserted country road.  
It is the exploring of another that helps us explain  
how and why we feel.  
The mountains are climbed and seas are crossed  
simply because they are there.  
When I sought to end my life I was frustrated,  
yet strangely calm.  
When others attempt to bring about my early demise I am furious,  
and fight to protect that which I would have willingly tossed aside.  
When faced with impossible odds,  
I press on.

*“I will heal,”* I convince myself,  
after others  
have long since given up.  
I push forward, with my back no longer  
pressed firmly against the wall.  
After all opposition is overcome,  
I stand  
with blood upon my hands, sore arms,  
and a stiffness in my legs and back.  
I crack an ironic smile as I straighten up  
to limp away into a new day,  
*and let the healing begin...*

Say “Hello” (A subtle difference)

13 March 99

I will learn from my mistakes,  
    Not just dwell on and regret.  
Over silly notions or lonely nights  
    Or angry words best to forget.  
I have fought in the war  
    And lived in the peace.  
But when I close my eyes,  
    The battles never cease.  
So quickly after you stop feeding it  
    You begin to starve your brain.  
Thoughts start to grow cloudy  
    And creativity submerges again.  
To look at the sunlight every morning  
    Streaming through the bedroom window.  
I reach with my arms outstretched  
    For a glimpse of a future I won't let go.  
Every step I take my feet seem to know  
    Even though I've never been this way before.  
Maybe they've got the inside story,  
    But I can't prove what they ignore.  
A touch is a blessing upon the skin,  
    A tickle to the nerves within.  
Body and souls always seem to mingle  
    To let the healing process begin.  
You can run a hundred miles  
    Trying to escape that thing called “fate”.  
But it seems to always catch up to you,  
    Always just in time- never late.  
Dream a dream for me tonight,  
    And maybe tomorrow night, too.  
It will make a subtle difference in your smile  
    The next time I say “Hello” to you...



**Stay the night**

4-30-98

No, you don't have to go home tonight.  
It's not wrong if on the inside it feels right.  
You're always on my mind when I go to sleep.  
And all day long, it's your memory I keep.  
A past life I'm always willing to explore.  
And every time you leave, I'm left wanting more.  
No, you don't have to go home tonight.  
The woman of my dreams stands in my plain sight.  
I want to show you things to better see your life.  
Help you experience some joy amidst all the strife.  
I love all the secrets you feel you can reveal to me.  
I hope sometime you'll let me try to set your passions free.  
No you don't have to go home tonight.  
I won't tell a soul if you hold me tight.  
When I need you, I know you'll be there.  
I don't need to taste your body to know that you care.  
No you don't have to go home tonight.  
You don't have to.

---

**Ironic Smile**

4-3-97

I don't want to dream anymore.  
Don't want to reach for what I can't have.  
Don't want to see what I shouldn't want.  
Don't want to desire what I can't please.  
Don't want to risk the fall or tempt the tease.  
Don't want to remember what I'll never forget.  
Don't want to live another day of regret.  
Don't want to watch the stars fall.  
Don't want to face the end of it all.  
All I want to do is cry.  
Let loose this weight I bear.  
Scream at a fate that doesn't care.  
All I want to do is live.  
And hope that this little ironic smile.  
Might last more than just a little while.

**If You're Gonna**

5-30-98

Five years of understanding and a place we called home.  
I thought that I could trust you, that you'd never roam.  
What's the matter, girl? Don't it matter no more?  
I still say I love you even after you slam the door.

*If you're gonna walk*, walk far from this place.  
*And if you're gonna cry*, cry tears streaming down your face.  
*If you're gonna fight*, fight with words that sting.  
*And if you're gonna lie*, lie like it don't mean a thing  
*I said if you're gonna lie*, lie like it don't mean a thing.

Five years of compromises and a dream we shared.  
I look back on the good times and the times we cared.  
I never thought what I took for granted was just your game.  
I didn't ask for too much, so what's this other guy's name?

*If you're gonna walk*, walk far from this place.  
*And if you're gonna cry*, cry tears streaming down your face.  
*If you're gonna fight*, fight with words that sting.  
*And if you're gonna lie*, lie like it don't mean a thing  
*I said if you're gonna lie*, lie like it don't mean a thing.

It's driving me crazy and tearing me up inside.  
Why'd you have to go and trample my pride?  
This might not be the right thing, but it's what I have to do.  
I'm sorry if you're sorry, I forgive and still love you.

*So if you're gonna walk*, walk to the arms of this boy.  
*'cause if you're gonna cry*, let it be tears of joy.  
*If you're gonna fight*, fight to stay with me.  
*And if you gotta lie*, lie next to me.  
*I said if you gotta lie*, lie next to me.

## **The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise**

6-2-98

It's hard to believe that it had been eight long years already since I first became aware of the "mythical" beast known as the blue butted monkey of paradise. What began as a letter delivered to me onerously since I had just recently moved into my new home soon grew into an obsession. The letter read, "Father, I have most wonderful news! I found him! He does exist. The knowledge and wisdom he has is just amazing. He predates time and..." The letter continues from there, or at least I assume, but the second page was missing, and I had no clue as to where or whom the letter was from.

The prior occupant of my home was preceded in death by his wife almost ten years earlier, and his final years are a complete blank. There is no mention of a son, and Anderson is a relatively common name so I had nothing left to go on. I would have had to dismiss it entirely if another letter hadn't shown up two months later. It told of how this son, who still remained nameless, had managed to catch up to this creature while in the forests of Brazil. He explained how the creature talked in such a soothing voice, and that he seemed to know everything the boy could possibly ask him. The son explained that he was going to fly the blue butted monkey back to the States later that week, and would be living with him in Ohio. The letter ended with the admission that the son was dying of some disease he had picked up while hunting, and that he hoped his father would be able to visit him before he died.

## A Tension Span

Having narrowed my search, I was able to find a Charles Anderson in Middletown, Ohio, and I managed to catch the next flight out yet that night. Unfortunately, upon my arrival I learned that the letters had been sent years ago, the son was long since dead— and his wife had never heard of a blue butted monkey, only the red butted variety that they had at the zoos. With my hopes crushed, I returned home.

For a year it gnawed at me, “What was this? Was it some joke? Was this kid on drugs? Blue butted monkey of paradise— what the hell is that?” It would have just been another silly chapter in my life if I hadn’t overheard some men talking down at the bar one August night. Yeah, they had heard of the blue butted monkey of paradise. “He was some freak of nature that held all of the world’s knowledge in his hands, if you believe in that sort of thing.”

And so it began, as I set out to find out more about this creature.

In Alabama, I heard of how the blue butted monkey had helped the Egyptians gain their skills in architecture. In Maine, I was laughed out of most towns as yet another drunken old man in the grip of senility. In Oklahoma, one man claimed to have seen him just the other day— but he also believed in UFOs and aliens, so was not exactly reliable. In Washington, I learned that the blue butted monkey had tutored the Greek on democracy, and that in turn led to power for the people. Yet another said that he was at the battle of Troy, and that Ulysses was a strong man, but it was the wisdom of a blue butted monkey that led him safely home. It was unbelievable the number of things that were attributed to this creature, yet still he eluded me.

## The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise & other stories

Finally, on a cold October night almost three years ago, a voice came from out of the darkness in an alley. I walked down it and there stood a stranger in a trench coat who looked the other way as he talked to me. “So you want to know more of the blue butted monkey? On the fifth day, God created the blue butted monkey of paradise and his mate. He was a wise monkey who would rule a paradise. The world revolved around his very word, and his ideas and thoughts were great. But he was cast out of paradise because he had grown too smart for his own good, and had eaten the forbidden fruit of ego. To correct this mistake, on the sixth day God created another monkey and mate, but this time they had no blue butts.” At this the stranger laughed and walked away. At the end of the alley he tossed his trench coat and hat aside and vaulted over the gate. The last thing I glimpsed was the most curious shade of blue—and to this day, of the blue butted monkey of paradise, I have heard no more...

**June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1998- 7:15 P.M.**

7:32.40 P.M. to 7:43.20 P.M.

I am numb, and cold.

I always thought I would be filled with anger,

but I am empty.

No guilt.

No remorse.

Memories of a summer long gone come to my mind.

A girl, her laugh, her hair, and those nights we shared.

It was just a time we shared.

It was only a memory we would both have.

She's making more memories now, and so am I.

She and I are no more.

No new experiences in common.

It isn't so bad, I admit.

There is no credit for time served.

Time has a bad habit for passing,  
and tomorrow will so shortly be yesterday.

All that we shared will be in scrapbooks that no one reads,  
and those years will be times forgotten and ignored,  
and that love will be a victim of fate,  
and that failed marriage will be just another statistic.

**First Impression**

7-21-98

7:17.48 P.M. to 7:24.42 P.M.

When you first walk into the room you are astounded.  
The flashing lights and the noise of the crowd surround you.  
Sometimes you pass like a ghost through the masses.  
Sometimes you feel every eye is on you.  
When you look in the mirror you see the mask.  
When you turn to the world it's only a masquerade.  
You try so damn hard to feel something more,  
and some days you try to feel anything.  
I wake up in the middle of nowhere,  
but I'm surrounded by everything I've tried to forget.  
I wake up from a fading dream,  
but I'm no more awake than before.  
They say it's the first impression that means the most,  
but my thoughts linger on the last words from your lips.

---

**“I will eat your brain,  
just so I can piss your hopes,  
and shit your dreams.”**

## Yesterday– Memories of Tammy

8-24-98 10:27.31A.M. to 12:32.22 P.M.

Alouishes (the scum sucker) and all the others in the Fish Tank.  
Carrying those damn speakers (Pioneer 15”) up to sixth floor in Abel Hall.  
Kewshmun sweets (where did Clay get that from?)  
All the “informative” articles they posted in Abel Hall’s restroom stalls.  
Me getting to wear your Norfolk band jacket.  
The hats– Red&White Kamikaze, Blacktop, No Fear.  
The jackets– Norfolk Jazz Band, that black denim with gray hood, and the Infinite Conquest International Black Leather Jacket.  
The shoes- Nike black/brown hightops (My “Hikies”).  
Your Wayne State Marching Band uniform– still in my closet  
The Snow Penis from our first apartment (There’s *no* penis like *snow* penis)  
Josh eating Chap’s dog food in your Mother’s basement.  
The pair of underwear for Valentine’s Day that says “My Heart Throb” on the front that was way too big.  
That first time we met– when we went out to Dallas’ place (Bloomfield– before SENTRY).  
The dances in high school, prom, and slow dancing to Bryan Adam’s “Everything I Do”.  
That time out at Dallas’ trailer home when we did it, everyone left to give us some time, they came back, and we told ‘em to come back later.  
The time we got stuck out Northwest of town. Boy were our parent’s pissed– and we got to break that cherry picker’s rope.  
When we took Debbie up to meet Mr. Jason Fricke, he hopped into bed and said, “I took off my shorts...”  
The wonderful shopping experience that is Wayne’s Pamida.  
Brian, from the Wayne Runza (later Norfolk).  
Having that video store near us at the first apartment, but still driving to the Gay Theater to get videos (and movie posters).  
Wayne State Marching Band (when you weren’t on crutches)  
That first apartment– it may not have been a beauty, but it was our first home.  
Tying Clay up in that apartment (didn’t seem to like it, though).  
Being chased by the mystery car, and the threatening letters (that mysteriously disappeared).  
Clay and Laura– ewwww. Not in OUR entertainment room, you kids.  
That fucked up red diner table in the first apartment.  
Those anti-personnel dishes we started with– they weighed five pounds apiece.  
Yaggi Bushi, the turbo Yag (after a little shaving), and the Booby Song (“Booby, Booby, I can’t believe it’s true. Here I thought there was just one, but hey!, Guess what? There’s two!”)  
I still think Shawn peeked on that little “backseat road trip” from the 9-mile corner south of Bloomfield to Pierce.



## The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise & other stories

Chandra getting so pissed off about me telling Shawn about Scott and her playing tennis.

Shawn just being a schmuck in general.

Shawn's wonderful birthday present (the mattress on the floor at his old condemned house).

Shawn and Chandra.

Chandra and Mike.

Chandra and Clay.

Clay staying at our apartment the summer we got married— wasn't that togetherness?

Listening to RATT, and getting caught in that downpour.

Track meets and X-Country meets.

Buying only Norfolk Marching Band sponsored fireworks.

Having my maroon Caprice sold out from under me and getting the Olds.

Me wrecking the front end of the Olds, and having James finally fix it (Cerny Auto Salvage).

Sneaking over to Abel 6 (some kinda nudists colony, wasn't it?).

Watching Star Trek: The Next Generation.

Brent Spiner (Data) was such a stud.

Playing Serpent Isle— damn that went forever, and who bought that, anyway?

The computer setup under the bunk bed at UNL.

Popping over the edge of that bunk bed and asking Clay if "He ever laid his hands upon the Wonder Mounds."

Having sex up top with unsuspecting people underneath (we got Adam and Shawn, anybody else?)

The mattress on the floor and that dinky TV.

Shroed barging in on us "in the act" down at UNL, then disappearing from embarrassment, never to return.

Dave Schlessel— The Big Nosed Bastard that lived next door (excess Danzig).

Having to listen to 106.3 the Blaze.

The "back way" to Lincoln (through Stanton and Valparaiso, etc.)

Shopping at OakView and CrossRoads and WestRoads (big deal, at the time).

The country music laser light show a few summers back at UNL.

Playing Trac-Ball out at Skyview.

Going for walks around Skyview (sometimes you rollerbladed).

Getting engaged (Nebraska Diamond scores again), and telling your parents.

Getting your trumpet stolen, getting a new one at Dietz in Lincoln, and working for that Trumpet player/teacher.

Sneak Peek Software, where Adam and I used to go.

Me and Shawn breaking up at UNL (over you or over us?) — and he still has my Atari.

Shawn's roommate at Wesleyan— Kurt.

Getting on to YABBS at Wayne State.

The nasty poem Shawn posted about his and Chandra's first time.

Me being a Chicken Farmer at Waldbaums (in Bloomfield and Wakefield).

Moving across town in Wayne, to a place that was too small, and only for a few months (since we moved to 1404 Country Club Road).

That damn refrigerator from hell— was that from the 1950's?!?

## A Tension Span

Me breaking into the School while you were visiting Chandra on Spring break.  
The conspiracy that followed.  
Moving to Norfolk.  
All the pre-marriage showers, and getting the wedding dress.  
Sending Mom the JCPenny bag with my hair in it (seven inches of ponytail).  
July 2nd, 1994.  
I kept your wedding bouquet for a long time– when did it finally disappear?  
2 or 3 years later?  
The wedding album that plays a song.  
Pastor Nitz should have let us have the songs we wanted.  
How your Mother tried to hide that our Unity Candle got broken that day.  
The honeymoon in Norfolk, Virginia– and being too young to rent a freakin’ car.  
Walking everywhere. Or taking the Bus Transits.  
That long stretch of shopping malls we tried to have a heatstroke walking along.  
Sex in the ocean (well, maybe that was just a Bay).  
Wayne’s Go-Go World just down the street from our motel.  
Me getting 2 years of probation with Dale (thank-you judge Garden), and the short-lived visits to Jean (my shrink) because she died in a wreck.  
Being able to walk to the Gas’NShop (from 1404) and still talk to Chandra on the cordless phone.  
Clay and Chandra– from our Best man and Maid of Honor to husband and wife in four months.  
That night that Dave hit on Chandra and Clay sliced his hand open,  
Clay kicking in the door, and getting kicked out.  
That I was a little mentally and emotionally fucked up at the time  
because I had just found out about you and James.  
Me working at BeefAmerica, running a saw for \$7.45 an hour.  
That fight we had where I threw my hamburger up, and it left a ketchup mark on the ceiling.  
Running up monster phone bills talking to James.  
The long road trip to Clay and Chandra’s wedding.  
You and James didn’t know that I knew what was going on–  
and who was that hairy guy that rode back with us?  
The 3-D pictures and holograms in that store in Omaha.  
Visiting Clay and Chandra in Minnesota– and having the T-Bird blow a belt before your brother’s wedding.  
Visiting the Mall of Americas, after we finally found it.  
Chandra and Clay’s eternally flat air mattress.  
Going to Chicago and seeing the Hard Rock Cafe.  
The brakes on the Grand Am, or lack thereof.  
Getting screwed over by Schrier– “Be a Schrier Denier”  
Hunting all over the world for a Mustang for you, and finding that one good one in Pierce (and the occasional score in Lincoln and Norfolk)  
The crooked old bastard that sold cars out on Norfolk Avenue, that later got taken over by Brian and moved to Sunset Motors.

## The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise & other stories

The time we stopped to look at a car at Jenny Olds and you left the Grand Am in neutral and it “disappeared” – rolling back into that lady’s garden and running over her tomatoes.

That night the power went out and you stayed up all night so I could get up and go to work the next day.

Sending James all those magazine subscriptions for revenge– kinda childish, but it was fun collecting the forms.

You working at Runza in Wayne, and in Norfolk, and at Ramada, and Quality Dry Cleaners, and Days Inn, and Alco.

Jeneau– the short bastard from Ramada, and the escapades of the new manager and his limo-driving wife.

Jamie, and the corvette his name won.

Getting Pleurisy while working at Quality Dry cleaners.

Getting ionized at Day’s Inn, and second-hand Mace from Eddie.

Sheila was a witch, and we screwed em’ for the network.

That damn pole in the living room at 501 S. First.

Those damn hot nights before we bought the air conditioner.

The mini-tree we had for greenery.

Making pancakes from the batter mix in yellow containers.

Me always snuggled under an electric blanket, no matter what the season.

Bad electricity (especially in Wayne) that blew out lightbulbs and hairdryers before their time.

NIN and Techmaster P.E.B. (as well as Travis Tritt, John Michael Montgomery, Sawyer Brown, Colin Raye, and Garth Brooks).

Me listening to Toad the Wet Sprocket, Meat Loaf, and Dream Theater.

You getting stuck listening to Queensryche’s “Silent Lucidity” that one night because you didn’t know how to run my CD Player.

“Two Out Of Three Ain’t Bad” – *I lied* – I did love you.

Me air drumming– funny looking, wasn’t it?

The Alpine CD player that got around.

The Reno portable CD player that didn’t get around.

Playing darts at Ramada and Mel’s.

Getting the Couch and Big Chair for Christmas.

Me getting the black leather jacket (to go with the No Fear hat).

Me always getting you Disney movies and country CD’s for your birthday and Christmas (I didn’t know what else to get).

You getting pissed that Valentine’s Day back in high school when Clay and I ended up sliding into the ditch from icy roads, and I gave your roses away to the girls at the Basketball game in Bloomfield.

Getting the headboard, that excellent painting (I had to carry home) and the wall unit from Ballantyne’s when they closed.

Lance Logan– was his “friend” a boy or a girl?

All the stuff that got ruined by water damage in the back closet.

Laura and Amy and Frank– what kind of triangle was that?

Lane– first child of Chandra and Clay.

Watching that show with Chance Harper (Strange Luck?) and Vr.5 (with Sydney Bloom)

## A Tension Span

Tristan Joshua and Sydney Marie– the children that never were.  
Tierny– second child of Chandra and Clay.  
Levi– offspring of Laura and that guy– fun wedding.  
Clay and everybody got in a fight at that dance.  
We did it on Ray’s waterbed (Clay’s roommate when he lived up in Yankton)  
The ceremonial burning of the pill package.  
Playing Scruples at Dave’s, and finding out you knew me all too well.  
Playing melee in Starcon II– the Spathi Butt Missiles.  
Playing Chip’s Challenge, and the cute little “whew” he said at the end of a level.  
That talking parrot from the SoundBlaster: “Ow! Don’t touch me! Goodbye– have a nice day!”  
All the interesting people you met on the #depressed channel.  
Having Mike (Father Time) come down and visit for his vacation (and getting kicked out of Days Inn and having to stay at the Blue Ridge).  
Getting the picture from SomeCat, and drawing the ears and whisker’s on SomeCock.  
All the funny sound files: Dicken’s Cider, barney, movie clips, etc.  
The first time you introduced Chandra to Yabbs and IRC (about 8 hours each)  
Dallas and Amy, and their kid.  
Clay mixing drinks in the 32-oz glasses at their first place out east of town.  
The fireworks at Skyview every Fourth of July.  
Always having a real Christmas tree, each year had a story since they never wanted to fit in the trunk.  
The clock you made me out of a CD.  
The lava lamp.  
The Dinosaurs 3D hollusion poster.  
Getting all those CDs melted into the case that one summer.  
Seeing Les Miserable at the Lied Center.  
Going to Worlds of Fun, not riding on any rides, and getting monster tan lines from the sunburn.  
The caricature pictures of us we had drawn while at Worlds of Fun.  
Having to do laundry at the Wash Tub.  
Getting the washer and dryer from your brother, and having Clifford try to park it in his garage.  
The time we went water skiing and Jet skiing up at Pierce with your Dad, and that one cloudy day we went out to the sand pit south of town with him.  
Having Pat and his girlfriend help us move to 802 S. First.  
Visiting Adam in Lincoln every so often.  
Linda dying from an aneurysm.  
Your Mom and Dallas getting married.  
Your brother getting married.  
Gambling on the President.  
Me and my damn Computer Shoppers.  
The wavy mirrors that we had by the bathroom– that was style.  
The entertainment ledge, dying refrigerator (#3), low ceilings, and **The Bee!**  
all at 501 S. First.  
The Walt Disney World vacation that never was.

## The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise & other stories

CCCS and Dawn Dolesh.

Shawn ???, whose lost checkbook got our comforter and Walt Disney World Explorer.  
Getting an Atari, the little color TV, and a few game cartridges.

The guitar you got me for my birthday.

Beef clothes (and before, Chicken clothes) – aren't you glad you don't have to smell them or wash them anymore?

The Union dance when Scott and Todd were hammered and you got the light blue Windsor cap.

The little monkey (with banana) that we won at a fair, and hung over the coat rack at the foot of the stairs. (And the Big Monkey (with banana) we got later).

The Toy– that hand-held massage device.

Playing Donkey Kong Country on the Super Nintendo– we beat it, didn't we?

Playing Super Mario Brothers 3 all the way through (got the book).

The Orbitron (or whatever they called it) ride of three circles you'd spin in– the only fair ride I'd go on.

You losing your license for speeding too often. (No officer, we weren't avoiding you, we were just here to visit this farmhouse, right, Trav?)

Dean's Auto Repair.

Watching Legends of the Fall for the first time.

Getting contacts.

The Christmas where you got the cat that meowed, I got the dog that barked, and Ginger and Duane got some other animals (a cow and ???).

Our first Christmas in Wayne (pine needles– everywhere).

Always getting stuck reading my book, until we got married, and you didn't seem interested anymore.

Finally getting wedding pictures.

Sleeping on the couch those weeks before you left.

August 27th, 1997.

Moving out to the apartments over by Northeast.

Going to the Garth Brooks concert.

I wish holding you that night wouldn't have felt awkward.

Selling the Grand Am.

Leaving for California.

Coming back for the divorce.

August 14th, 1998.

You get your maiden name back September 14th, 1998.

You can remarry February 14th, 1999 (Valentine's Day).

## A Tension Span

I tried to remember everything, and wrote down what I could.  
I will miss you very much.  
I loved you, even when I didn't know how to show it.  
I made a lot of mistakes, and for them I am sorry.  
It is a shame things didn't work out between us,  
but we just weren't good at living together.  
I hope you are happier now than you were.  
I don't want you to forget the good times we did have.  
I don't want you to ignore or dwell on the bad times we had.  
This was a time we spent together– it is history now.  
I would like it if you would stay in touch with me,  
but if you wish to leave the past in the past, you may.  
Thank-you for the time we spent together.  
Good Bye.  
I Love You.

8-24-98 12:32.22 P.M.

**The Fork in the Road**

8-16-99

2:43:56 A.M. to 2:51:59 A.M.

We dined in the company of Kings.  
Whether we chose to be but a voice among the masses,  
we were heard.  
And if we chose to sit upon the fence,  
we knew falling was an option out of our hands.  
We could choose to be like Ishmael,  
and be witness to the eternal struggle.  
Or we choose to be the struggle,  
or the titans,  
or the time of peace.  
We are an Army of One.  
Free will our weapon of choice.  
And after facing ten thousand sunrises,  
we had ten thousand sunsets to welcome us home.  
Every day is a chance to choose.  
We stand in awe at the mystery of life that surrounds us,  
but even more exciting is the life within us.

**There Comes A Time**

4-30-2000

2:12:20 A.M. to 2:20:43 A.M.

There comes a time  
when you can no longer hold everything inside  
and memories come like a pouring rain  
washing over you, as if to ease the pain.  
Can you feel the everything  
at your fingertips  
on the edge of your mind?  
With another step the journey continues.  
With another moment, lost in “me’s” and “you’s”.  
There comes a time  
when time stands still  
and in that minute, your hopes and dreams fill.  
You stand amazed at that which you cannot believe  
and at the edge of your mind,  
the possibilities of it all begins to conceive.  
Let it fall, let it drown.  
Let it encompass you in everything.  
When you awake to a call  
that only you can hear.  
You know there comes a time,  
a short, precious time,  
when it’s up to you to conquer your fears.



**Lifetime Warranty**

4-30-2000

4:23:32 A.M. to 4:28:52 A.M.

“You self-righteous fool!

“What makes you think anything you say matters?”

she yelled.

“*Because... it... **does**,*” he whispered,

as his statement was punctuated

by the door across the room slamming.

He growled and lashed out

at an innocent door.

Once.

Twice.

Then no more.

As he wiped the blood from his knuckles,

he noticed that his hand would heal...

but that the door,

like many other unspoken things,

could never be healed.

Only replaced.

---

*“So often getting something off your chest  
involves placing that burden on someone else’s mind”*

**“What I Wouldn’t Give”**

5-13-2000

2:59:55 A.M. to 3:08:36 A.M.

Pre-conceived notions is the baggage we bring with us  
in the hopes we don’t pick up more of it.

But with each passing day  
they are blended and shaped anew and more distinctly.

Whether we walk, crawl, run,  
or remain deathly still,

we move forward at the same pace as our brethren.

What I wouldn’t give for a piece of my history.

Something solid to hold in my arms once more.

To whisper, “*good night*,” to.

*What I wouldn’t give...*

But all I have is memories and a few trinkets.

Petty, silly things collected along the way.

I think I shall hold onto them a bit longer.

Maybe add to it a fleeting moment or two,

before this scrapbook of the flesh has made its final entry,

and the pages are thrown wide for the world to read...

**The Angel Smiled Cried**

5-24-2000

2:51:43 P.M. to 3:05:02 P.M.

The angel looked down,  
and shed a tear for all she saw.  
At the senseless violence, all the betrayal.  
She looked as the people stepped forward,  
in lines,  
in masses,  
in parades,  
in funeral processions.

*Into the night.*

*And into the light.*

It was not within her power to judge.  
She could only watch, and listen,  
and hope that tomorrow would be different.  
That the people would have the courage  
to look around them,  
and ahead of them,  
instead of just down.

The angel looked around  
and caught a glimpse,  
a fleeting glimpse,  
of a little dream in a child's eyes.

*And the angel smiled.*

**I Saw Her Today (She's Always on My Mind)**

5-15-2000

12:22:42 A.M. to 12:45:49 A.M.

I saw her today.

She stood there across the playground,  
and looked at me for a time,  
before she smiled, she winked,  
and her little laugh made me feel so warm.

And I love her more than peanut butter.

*I wonder if she's thinking of me,  
'cause she's always on my mind.*

I saw her today.

She stood there across the dance floor,  
and she held me in her arms for a time,  
before she questioned, she paused,  
and her soft kisses made me feel so warm.

And I love her more than my first car.

*I wonder if she's dreaming of me,  
'cause she's always on my mind.*

I saw her today.

She stood there across the aisle,  
and she whispered with me for a time,  
before she nodded, she vowed,  
and her "I do" made me feel so warm.

And I love her more than any other.

*I wonder if she's as happy as me,  
'cause she's always on my mind.*

I saw her today.  
She stood there across the hospital room,  
and let me look at her for a time,  
before she offered, she smiled,  
and our baby she gave me made me feel so warm.  
And I love her more than I thought I could.  
*I wonder if she feels as complete as me,  
'cause she's always on my mind.*

I saw her today.  
She lay there across the chapel,  
and looked so beautiful this last time,  
before she left, she left,  
and her parting left me so cold inside.  
And I love her more with each passing day.  
*I wonder if in heaven she's missing me,  
'cause she's always on my mind.*

She's always on my mind...

## A Tension Span

[[ INSERT COIN ]]

12-1-2000

10:07.24PM

You may remember seeing me once,  
in the arcade..  
staring intently at the screen..  
wrestling a joystick..  
pounding buttons..  
laughing.. cursing..  
Enjoying myself.  
For you see, I am a gamer.

I have paid a king's ransom in quarters  
to get beyond what lies around me.  
I have fought off aliens.  
I have avenged my fallen brothers.  
I have piloted every ship— air or sea.  
I have killed the undead.  
I have rescued my comrades.  
I have driven ultra-fast cars.  
I have crawled through countless dungeons.  
I have gotten the girl.  
Oh, yes, I sure have.. :)  
You may laugh. Go ahead.  
I have seen this world, and the next,  
and the clink of another quarter  
has resurrected me for so many times.  
For you see, I am a gamer.

I go on with lightning reflexes,  
a quick eye, and a quicker mind.  
There is no prison I cannot escape.  
No goal too far out of reach.  
No weapon I cannot wield.  
No puzzle I cannot figure out.  
No mission too impossible.  
For you see, I am a gamer.  
I have recovered fabulous artifacts and treasures.  
And along the way, uncovered something else:  
That whether I win or lose— *I tried...*  
And sure, others may be better.  
But there will always be that gleam in my eyes,  
and you may have it, too.  
In our own little way, it's our chance to be heroes.  
To go where we otherwise might not dare,  
to face what we might never face,  
to attempt what we never would in real life—  
In the hopes that if the time comes,  
we might have some of that courage,  
and quick thinking,  
and morality,  
and experience,  
to do what is right.

For you see, I am a gamer..  
and I have much, much more left to play...

**When I awake**

6-16-2001

11:35PM to 11:39PM

To have known love.  
and damned it  
and wanted it more than life itself  
after having tasted its sweet breath  
danced with the thought  
and betrayed it  
and let it wash over me.  
To have dreams.  
of more  
or even a glimpse  
at what it so coyishly teases.  
With a whisper.  
with a surprised gasp  
and arms wrapped as tight  
as it is upon my every thought.  
When I open my eyes— you.  
When I close my eyes— you.  
I dream of you.  
of us  
of me  
with you.  
and when I awake  
I bask in your embrace.



**Laughter is the worst medicine**

6-19-2001

1:32AM to 1:36AM

When there is no artistry  
there is no mystery.  
When there is no compassion  
there is no understanding.  
When there is no mountain  
there is no peak.  
When there is no destination  
there is no journey.  
So here I sit.  
Unable to picture.  
Unable to feel.  
Unable to see.  
Unable to begin.  
And I find it is no mystery that I cannot  
understand the peak of my journey.  
For when I walk, it is alone.  
And when I cry, it is alone.  
But when I laugh,  
and oh, sometimes I do...  
It is most often with you.

**Rest in Piece**

Oct 26, 2003

3:45:54AM to 3:54:23AM

Will this reckless lifestyle be the death of me?  
Can this appetite for vengeance quench my thirst for adversity?  
Can this cross I barely bear be my lever to the sky?  
If I'm down here on my knees, can I ever hope to fly?  
Would you still love my charming words if I littered them with lies?  
Could I wish for a warm hello instead of more cold good-byes?  
Will my happiness remain a memory or on the horizon does it lay?  
Can I dream away this blackest night into another nightmare day?  
Will I walk away again, another wounded victim of foolish pride?  
Can you say you love me, love, without a tear welling up inside?  
Will I ever answer these questions without a trace of fear?  
Or will I crawl into that numbness that I often hold so dear...

**New Year**

1-1-2004

3:42:45 AM to 3:52:56 AM

It is a blessing to have the sight of a blind man  
as in the dark I work to memorize every curve of your body  
with my fingertips.

To discover your tension of the day,  
then push it away,  
and listen to your soft breath exhale.

It is so easy to lose myself in you.

In your arms, so comfortable to me.

I whisper the words you need to hear...

the wonder if letting that genie out of the bottle  
would lessen its power—

as if fantasy into reality dulls the dream.

*But you are so warm.*

I like the way the sun catches your hair,  
and moonlight lights up your eyes.

And how in the summertime you can't sit still,  
and in the winter snuggle close and tight.

“*Is it a dream?*” I wonder as I awake...

but as my eyes adjust to the darkness of this night  
you still lie there exhausted at my side.

Age of Innocence

13 August 2004

She was pretty in a plain sort of way  
You could tell She felt out of place  
by that look upon her face  
She was the girl worth a second glance  
but not a second date  
And She cried an awful lot  
but that didn't stop her from feeling ashamed  
She was always quick to smile  
too bad it didn't last for awhile  
And She had such big, caring eyes  
too bad She spent so much time just looking down  
So hard to take the time  
to cheer her up when She was feeling down  
Don't know why they took her for granted  
as She waited patiently for that day  
for her prince charming to come  
and whisk her off away  
It's sad to see She's older now  
still pretty, still the same  
But don't let that assurance fool you—  
She's still that little girl deep inside  
I'd like to take her hand  
and dance with her awhile  
But you see, She's not innocent anymore  
and I wish all those years ago  
I'd told her I loved her more...

**Short End of the Stick**

5-20-05 8:00AM to 8:24AM

Now I know it isn't right  
and I know it's not fair,  
when I see you walking down the street  
and I shouldn't have to care.  
I'm sorry for the way this all went down.  
I thought I'd always be there  
but on separate paths we're bound,  
and our destinies are unaware.  
I didn't realize how much it'd hurt  
    on the night we said our good-byes.  
Got a hug, no kiss  
    and the tears in your eyes.  
It's sad the way things turned out  
    between me and you.  
Saying I'm sorry simply isn't enough  
    but it's all I know how to do.  
I didn't mean to waste your time  
    or lead you so far astray.  
And I hope, and I know you pray  
    that things might be better off this way.  
But there's a pain in my heart, and an ache in my soul  
and I have to wonder if the last seven years are an empty hole.  
And if they were meant to be a stepping stone  
why does it hurt so much to know you're alone?  
I hope I wasn't the best thing in your life.  
I didn't mean to set you up for a fall.  
I always assumed you'd wind up being my wife,  
but instead we ended up hitting the wall.  
I'm sorry, Good-bye, and after this we aren't friends.  
I know we shared something special,  
even if our crossed paths have different ends.

**Restless Nights**

3-24-05

9:25A.M. - 9:37A.M.

I looked around, and what did I find?  
A little girl driving me out of my mind.  
I shouldn't want— I shouldn't care...  
*So why does it feel so empty when she isn't there?*

She has this way of putting me in my place—  
All innocent eyes, yet a sly grin on her face.  
I want to hold her when she is sad  
*So why does wanting her make me feel bad?*

**But love is soft, and so are you.**

Can you see what's happening, or don't you even have a clue?  
My one temptation— it feels like a curse.  
Will crossing the line make things better or so much more worse?

**But love is hard, and so am I.**

Does she think "I'm just another guy"?  
Looking for subtle signals that she might send  
That she might want to be a little more than just friends.

**But love is tough, and so are we.**

Funny how we're both tangled in things that won't set us free.  
Holding hands is as far as it gets, it seems  
Save the rest for those restless night dreams...

**It's in your eyes**

4-14-05

8:30A.M.

It's in your eyes when I touch your face  
Loving that body underneath the lace.  
When I roll over in the morning to see  
That beautiful face looking back at me.  
And those nights after a little back rub  
Or washing your hair, splashing in the bath tub.  
That tender smile and your honest laugh  
Help to ease your troubled past.  
Because when I'm lying next to you  
You know there's nothing that I wouldn't do  
To be the one always on your mind.  
Funny how I lost my heart, and it's *you* that I find...

---

*When I whisper, "I love you"  
every night before I drift off to sleep  
I hope someday you will be in my arms to hear it.*

**I don't write Country Songs (What you want)**

She noticed I was watching her with love-struck eyes  
and came over to the bar to see just what I had in mind.  
I fumbled with my drink, putting words to what I think,  
when she leaned across and asked me,  
“So, cowboy, what do you want?”

“I want one good time  
and two stiff drinks  
and three dances on that floor.  
“I want four long hours to prove I'm your man  
and five days of giving more and more.  
“No one-night stand  
wait a week to meet your dad  
after a month long locked in your arms.  
“A year to get to know you like the back of my hand  
“A lifetime to be your man.”

So stomp your boots on the floor and get your hands in the air,  
You can sing along 'cause I know you care.  
On this hot summer night, her perfume lingers.  
Come on now, use those fingers for  
“One good time  
and two stiff drinks  
and three dances on that floor.  
“Four long hours to prove I'm your man  
and five days of giving more and more.  
“No one-night stand  
wait a week to meet your dad  
after a month long locked in your arms.  
“A year to get to know you like the back of my hand  
“A lifetime to be your man.  
“I said a lifetime to be your man.”



**Emotional Footprints**

5-18-2005 8PM

I am flawed.

I make mistakes.

I will have bad days.

I will be cold.

I will lose my temper.

I will make bad choices.

I will make you cry.

I need you to help me to be better.

I need you to remind me of my good side.

I need you to show me how to laugh again.

I need you to calm me.

I need you to let me love you.

When I met you, I wondered what life would be like with you.

Now I can't imagine my life without you.

People talk about finding their other half,

And I understand now what it means to be whole.

You comfort me in the day.

You tease me in my dreams at night.

You bring the purpose to my day.

You see in me the man I want to be.

You make me want to be your everything.

You make me need to be yours.

We have both been through heartache,

But we will let that guide us, not define us.

I've never met anyone so fragile, yet so strong.

Someone who understands the real me, someone so like me...

Only it's not my reflection— it's you standing before me.

When I hold you in my arms,

I realize we have such a long ways to go.

And that I will be there for you... for us...

every step of the way.

**“Can knowledge be so wrong?”**

“Sometimes daylight doesn’t define the day.”

*“It’s so hard to live to fight another day  
when I’m fighting so hard just to live today.”*

“The shadows grow long and the day is done.”

“This little tongue, telling lies and tempting fortunes,  
has led me on a merry quest.”

“The reigns of time shift and sway,  
yet remain within the grasp of a desperate man...”

“In a world of dreams, awakening is your worst nightmare.”

*“Don’t you see? It’s a matter of trust.”*

“When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall.

Or at least that’s what they tell me;

But in my little world, the cradle just hovers...

*...and the ground rushes up and smucks it!”*

**“And the pouring rain could never match the tears in my heart.”**

“The more I find myself unable to fly  
the less I find myself willing to walk.”

*“What do you do when the dream dies?”*

“Seek your answers, chase your dreams, reach your goals,  
and strive for more— because **you** can.”

*“...And the arrow of hate shattered the fragile heart.”*

“Everything fades with time,

but I’m still here and so...

*...are you?”*

“Dreams and reality— such distant cousins, it seems...”

“If the cosmos is infinite,  
then am I infinitesimal?”

“What is fault—  
*and why is it yours?*”

“It seems like it was some time ago,  
but it was just yesterday...  
three years ago today.”

**“You can chain my body— but not my mind.”**

“Angel of Mercy— she gently caresses my temple,  
whispers my name into my ear, then kisses me with lips  
as soft as rose... *petals?*”

“Who knows why butterflies fly,  
yet caterpillars seem so dumb.”

“Here’s to friendship and missed chances,  
caring and hope,  
the future,  
and to *the dream*,  
for *the dream* can **never** die—  
*only get better as time goes by...*”

*I, Jonathan, take you, Trudy,  
to be my lawfully wedded wife.*

*To guide and to follow you,*

*To teach and to learn from you,*

*To support and to draw strength from you,*

*To respect and to cherish you.*

*To stand behind you  
in your endeavors and your dreams.*

*To stand with you  
in your trials and your triumphs.*

*To stand before you  
with honesty and compassion.*

*And to love you with my whole heart,  
mind, body, and soul.*

*Until my last breath on this earth  
and forevermore with my first breath in heaven.*

*This I do solemnly swear.*

**Psychedelicacy**  
*Special Limited Edition*

{ ----    ---- }

*Jonathan Grimm*

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**“Personal Thoughts, Words & Deeds”**

[ The Yellow Tablet ] [ PTWD ]

“And I ask myself,  
If the cosmos is *infinite*,  
then am *i*  
*infinitesimal?*”

{ ---- \* ---- }

**ADDENDUM**

**The Pursuit of the Perfect HOE**

“It is not  
completely a matter  
of *perfection*,  
but a matter of  
a HOE.”

{ ---- \* ---- }

**T'DAM** {Te deum}

**The Degenerate Art of MindF\*ck**

“My tongue, your... *brain?*”

**My Life As A Stud**

**Part II.5**

“Of course,  
now pass the sea horses  
*and don your masks*,  
here comes a facet  
*of my faucet.*”

{ ---- \* ---- }

**M-LAWS:**

**Of sound mind and body...**

“And I ask myself,  
If a 2x4 floats,  
*then why am I*  
*just barely*  
*treading water?*”

## Implied Consent

*Special Limited Edition*

{ ---- ---- }

*Jonathan Grimm*

{ ---- ---- }

### **PAGE 49** [ Images ]

Every night I see a thousand distorted images–  
and every day,  
a thousand more.

### **A Lure of Flesh** [Hooked]

I guess it's just the allure of flesh,  
that makes me want to,  
y'know, want to...  
write about it.

### **Fade to Nothing**

“Sometimes daylight doesn't define the day...”

### **Parables Better Left Unsaid** [ Pale Blue ]

Everything fades with time,  
but I'm still here and so...  
are you...?

### **Numb**

“Nothing. Not even pain.”

## **A Fathom Below**

*Special Limited Edition*

{ ---- } }

*Jonathan Grimm*

{ ---- } }

## **Maximum Vend**

[ Turn crank slowly for Maximum Vend ]

## **Hoarse Latitudes**

“30 Degrees Above to 30 Degrees Below”

## **Alexithymia**

“ ... ”

# Burying Ghosts

*one shovelful at a time*

## Windmills

“Maddenly twisting, yet going nowhere”

The Blue Butted Monkey of Paradise  
& other stories

*“The Storm before The Calm...”*

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Still reading? Good. A Tension Span is the “best of” Throwing Gorillas Into Skyview Lake, which is the entire compilation of Psychedelicity, Implied Consent, A Fathom Below, and Burying Ghosts.

A Tension Span is broken down into three versions.  
the Greek Recipe is the “R” and “X” rated version (R is greek for recipe)  
A King’s Ransom is PG-13 (which is “Pretty Good”... if you’re 13)  
Her Eyes of Purest Blue is the best of the best, or so I’d like to believe

*Jonathan Grimm*

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