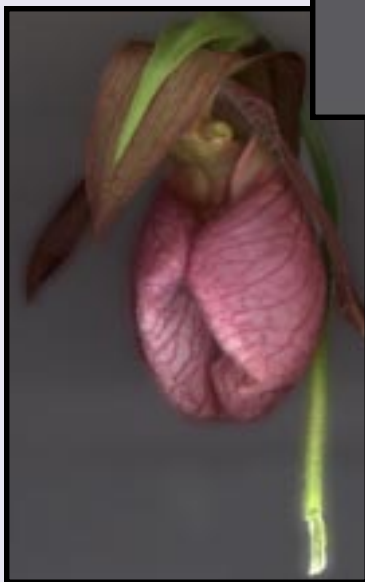


Poetry

Volume Three



*by
James
Mullen*

Oceanside Press
May 1999

POETRY
VOLUME THREE

JAMES LUTHER MULLEN

I have been truly graced this year by inspiration, and this tome stands to show for it. It is a thrill to have accomplished so much in just over a year, and a challenge to me to see what awaits for the next year. These pages would be blank if I were alone in the world, so I owe much grateful thanks to everyone who provides company to me.

Contents

I	ARISE (3/25/98)	1
II	AWAKE TO SPRING	3
III	4/14/98 10:50 P.M.	4
IV	NEWBORN (6/5/98)	5
V	CONCLUSION (6/5/98)	6
VI	MATURITY (7/27/98)	8
VII	GLEAM (8/5/98)	9
VIII	STREAK (8/5/98)	9
IX	NIGHT DREAMER (8/6/98)	10
X	SPEAK YOUR MIND	11
XI	9/2/98 11:30 A.M.	12
XII	9/2/98 12:00 P.M.	13
XIII	9/24/98 9:00 P.M.	14
XIV	10/13/98	14
XV	WONDER 10/23 9:30 P.M.	15
XVI	FLUORESCENT DREAMS 10/23 9:30 P.M.	16
XVII	SEIZURE 11/8/98 8:30 P.M.	17
XVIII	LORD, TOUCH MY HEART 11/10/98	18
XIX	WHISPER 11/18/98	19
XX	SPLINTERED 12/24/98 12:15 A.M.	20
XXI	RING OUT THE OLD 12/30/98 10:30 P.M.	21
XXII	SPRING ETERNAL 2/7/99 9 A.M.	21
XXIII	MOMENT 2/8/99 7:30 A.M.	22
XXIV	LAI D TO REST 2/8/99 11:14 P.M.	22
XXV	WEAKNESS 3/10/99	24
XXVI	DOWN 3/10/99 8:29 P.M.	24
XXVII	YOU ARE THERE	25
XXVIII	WIND IN THE NIGHT	25
XXIX	GROWING SEPARATION 4/13/99 12:19 P.M.	26
XXX	BLUE 4/21/99 8:58 P.M.	27
XXXI	ARROGANCE 4/21/99 9:22 P.M.	28
XXXII	DUST 4/21/99 9:36 P.M.	29
XXXIII	CAT 4/21/99 9:47 P.M.	29
XXXIV	THE QUIET ENIGMA 4/23/99 NEAR MIDNIGHT	30
XXXV	SLIPPING INTO DARKNESS 4/26/99 11:15 P.M.	31
XXXVI	MOON MAN 4/26/99 11:28 P.M.	32

XXXVII	A WALK IN THE WOODS	4/27/99	11:30 A.M.	33
XXXVIII	LITTLE ONE	4/27/99	10:30 P.M.	34
XXXIX	RACE	4/27/99	10:40 P.M.	34
XL	STOP AND WONDER	4/27/99	10:45 P.M.	35
XLI	BREAKNECK THOUGHTS	4/27/99	10:50 P.M.	35
XLII	MOON MAN	4/27/99	10:55 P.M.	36
XLIII	SKYWARD	4/29/99	11:30 A.M.	37
XLIV	SHE IS LOVED	5/3/99	11:30 P.M.	38
XLV	FOR A MOMENT	5/3/99	11:45 P.M.	39
XLVI	THE GAME	5/5/99	11:45 P.M.	40
XLVII	AFTER HOURS	5/99		41
XLVIII	ES IST FÜR SIE			45
XLIX	THIS ONE'S FOR YOU			46
L	MY STORY			47
LI	SUMMER WIND			49
LII	WHAT IF	5/11/99	4:30 P.M.	49
LIII	NAKED	5/11/99	9:45 P.M.	50
LIV	STARS	5/11/99	11:10 P.M.	51
LV	SUDDEN SMILE	5/11/99	11:23 P.M.	52
LVI	DREAMING OF HAPPINESS	5/11/99	11:26 P.M.	53
LVII	THE RAREST FLOWER	5/11/99	11:31 P.M.	54
LVIII	THE MYSTERY OF MEMORY	5/11/99	11:41 P.M.	55
LIX	ANOTHER DAY	5/11/99	11:45 P.M.	56
LX	A SONG	5/12/99	12:07 A.M.	57
LXI	THOUGHT FOR THE DAY	5/12/99	5:00 P.M.	58
LXII	WANDERING EYE	5/12/99		59
LXIII	ON A DREAMY DAY			60
LXIV	SADNESS			61
LXV	JEWEL	5/13/99	11:20 P.M.	62
LXVI	LOW TIDE	5/15/99	10:40 P.M.	63
LXVII	WAITING	5/16/99	9:00 P.M.	64
LXVIII	AT LAST	5/16/99	9:10 P.M.	65
LXIX	LIZARD	5/16/99	11:00 P.M.	66
LXX	WEAKNESS	5/17/99	9:25 P.M.	67
LXXI	TENDER THOUGHTS	5/17/99	9:30 P.M.	68
LXXII	STAND UP AND EXPLORE	5/18/99	11:40 A.M.	69
LXXIII	DAYDREAMING	5/18/99	11:45 A.M.	70
LXXIV	REBIRTH	5/18/99	11:55 A.M.	71
LXXV	RAIN	5/18/99		72

Something new, but necessary...

*This book is dedicated to
The Five Senses
and the enjoyment of them*

VOLUME THREE

I— ARISE (3/25/98)

The night is dark
The air is cold
Winter clings to emerging spring
With chilling, clenching fingers
I mourn the despair around me
Unable to continue
Overwhelmed by my surroundings
Belittled by passing time.
Looking for comfort I find none
Bitterness fills my mouth
And consumes my emotion
Frustrated by frustration
Distressed by distress
Weakened and alone I mourn
Tenderness has faded from my mind
The night is dark
The air is cold
But all nights are dark
Their sunless hours cold
Their dismal presence quickly passes
Gone before they grow old.
A sliver of light appears
And cannot be diminished
As if in memory of the night a cloud appears
Masking the newborn celestial ball

But the light still shows
And grows
Slowly my eyes raise to meet it
Spreading out from my inward focus
Awareness of the day spreads to every limb
Carrying the renewed vitality of hope
and love.
I recall the precious times
I smile at happy thoughts
Unsolicited, they pour out of my mind
Bringing life, energy and purpose to my body
The smallest spark ignites a flame
that burns with unbridled fury
The day is warm and bright
It peaks, then begins its ritual descent toward night.
The afternoon hours wane and fade
Uncertain feelings return
And grow
Yet their growth is controlled
Again it is night
Again the night is dark
Again the air is cold
But now I find comfort in the darkness
The cool shadows speak in whispered voices
The sun-glare imprint on my mind
short hours old brings vision to my dreams
There is comfort in the night
and coming dawn.

II— AWAKE TO SPRING

With the wind wafts
the sweet liquor scent of spring
All blossoms in bloom
on this breezy afternoon
Gentle rising currents
Carrying with them hope and the spirit of life
A re intoxicating consumptive
at the repeal of winter
The dark, soulless days of captivation
Break swiftly apart and dissipate in the refreshing air
I slept in hibernating silence
Coiled, lifeless inside
Balanced between restraint and decay
Seeing no end, sensing no release
Until the growing light touched my nose
and suggested resurrection
In weakened, stilted movements I arose
and crept forth to drink the beauty in
Tired and lifeless I continued
Curious about the source of my strength
Undaunted by fatigue and the resistance of my body.
With each step I confidently straightened
And entered, wide-eyed, beauty I yearned to grasp.
With unproclaimed suddenness
My soul leapt toward the sky
Reined in to its container
It stretched toward its goal
Drawing matter into spirit
Gone all traces of the night
Replaced with straining effort to take flight
And kiss the very face of God
In rising crescendo
of rebirth and revitalization.

III— 4/14/98 10:50 P.M.

Draw the line
Fence off the yards
Corral the livestock
I have been quartered
The farmer's wife
Wields her rusty knife
Hissing she sneers at us all
Cold, heartless
Anal retentive
Manipulative
Backstabbing
Bitch
All petticoats and poison
Pretense and perfume
She pushes us down
Strips away dignity and purpose
And cripples us to her will.
I do not hate
I can hate no one
But I will forever loathe
My soul is crushed into a lightless containment
Abusively constrained
I have no source of strength
But fear and loathing
Which offer undying power
Coupled with all consumptive appetite.
I am left hollow with need
and unfulfillable passion
The eternal flame
feeding upon itself
Dreams crashing
Blend with waking time
presenting an unpleasant cacophony
of uncertain realities

I stagger with truths I can't trust
Through nights that don't end
And days that end too soon
Who, What, Where, When, Why
All blur together into
How?
Who am I?
What have I become?
Where am I going?
When will this end?
Why must I go on?
How will I survive?

IV— NEWBORN (6/5/98)

Touch
Sweet touch
Reach out
Gentle fingers
to mine
Oh eyes
Bright with life
see love
at first sight
Breathe softly
and sleep
We have forever
together

V— CONCLUSION (6/5/98)

My moment presents itself
My sleeping demons awake
I stand tall in defiance
Protecting a desolate land
Laughing my opponents dissipate
Not vanquished – unnecessary
The hollow tree still
reaches to the sun
drinks deeply of the earth's waters
and stretches to the sky
But its core has succumbed
to infestation and disease
Destroyed heart leaves pain skin deep
But empty
the camera zooms in on a man
compressed within a crowd.
It tracks to widening eyes
and touches them
inverting with their scream
to reveal his solitude in the void.
Oh for hope
Oh for love
Oh for heat or cold
Compelling silence engulfs
Weakening insecure joints
Dropping to my knees before God
I yield
and die
to honor
tradition
and social morality
unwillingly destroyed
the crumbling carcass

thinks only of glory
and unwanted love
Passion exhausted in decay
on brightly burning flames
of other origin
Acceptance comes hard
and is spurned
Eternity will pass
before concession occurs
I commit myself to considered wrong
Because I trust my heart
And cannot deny its voice
It speaks to me of forbidden hope
And I dream
Knowing
Knowing
I die
I sin
I shouldn't
I must
I won't
But I always will
Always
I always will
I will always love her

VI— MATURITY (7/27/98)

Maturity comes hard
Its unfamiliar face a mask
Concealing true intention
True emotion
Genuine sentiment
Obscuring reality
behind decorum
and socially acceptable expression
A fanciful dance
of half-truths
and hidden meaning
Wake me when we reach the moon
I'm tired of this pretense
When I open my mouth
Truth will be spoken
When I open my ears
Truth will be heard
When I open my eyes
Truth will be seen
I wend my daily way through theories of reality
Each woven in intricate patterns
Fine etchings glorious in detail
bewildering the mind
beguiling the will
entwining visions deceiving sense and reason
Movement riles the dust of time
an obscuring cloud rising from memory
Infecting perception
Bending wills reach out to caress
unwilling victim yielding fights for identity
But is identity found or oppression survived?
Is war won by defeating the enemy,
or cessation of fighting?

If the conflict walks away,
is the remaining survivor victorious?
I am often the dazed and confused boy
wandering through the maze of maturity
unsure of whether I am approaching escape
or burrowing deeper into delusion
Success or survival,
which is it?

VII— GLEAM (8/5/98)

One tired hope
Exhausted and alone
Struggles for survival
Deprived of light and air
It contracts on itself
to feed on the strength of passion
Conserving energy and waiting
Ever vigilant
for a chance to expand
Wily and carnivorous it waits
In silence
for the dawn

VIII— STREAK (8/5/98)

Across the permanence of memory
a blur
barely registering,
wakens sleeping giants
Stirred from slumber
they consider
Who and How
What or Why
Constructing meaning
from motion

IX— NIGHT DREAMER (8/6/98)

Night Dreamer

Twilight sky-eyes, Ebony air-blanket, Luminescent space-thought,

Blue dawn memories

Wakened with setting sun, rising moon

Made virile with the chromatic display

Beginning carefully, playfully

Tiptoeing through shadows and half-light

Waking the temptations of the night

Drifting across cooling fields of action

Chasing away the warm touch of day

Squealing delight

Now thundering strong

Engaging all then slipping into the void

Teased from above

with glowing visages of hidden thought

Secretly hissing with wonder and enticement

Leaping out with the clouds

Taunting, flaunting in return

Unbridled joy, released and unrestrained

Tumultuous climax met and exploited

Leaves time only to dissipate

in morning's dew

to consider during sunlit hours

Deeds done

and dreamed

Awaiting night

X— SPEAK YOUR MIND

Alone I sit with our thoughts
I envision you beside me, ethereal
I smile at your smile
You open your lips
“What?” you ask.
My eyes brighten in response
Again you speak.
My eyes are speaking to your eyes.
What do they say?
They repeat what they see.
And what do they see?
They see your longing, and answer with desire.
I see.
In ensuing silence, my soul ponders your soul
Our eyes conveying unspoken thoughts
trading dark, imaginary secrets
I listen for your voice,
and hearing nothing,
read meaning into the sight of you before me
I drink deeply of the proffered nectar
and offer my chalice in return
No material existence betrays our union
we are one in spirit
and yield to imagined passions
A touch, a smile, a puppet conversation
all played out in silence
Blessed, wistful silence
Until you fade from view
And I have only your glowing eyes to entice me
and speak the hidden corners of your heart
In dancing rhythms
of my own creation

XI— 9/2/98 11:30 A.M.

Eyes straight ahead
see vertical green rise
casually into an azure sky
based on horizontal gray—
What a conflict!
The eye is drawn upward and outward
yet pinioned down and in,
with only the gray horizontal dividing line
to hold the view.
Beyond lie trees – ever green
Reaching to unbounded heights
Straining to touch the sky
and draw me with them
Yet below their line of sight,
stretching out from the firm touch of my feet
lies the dead, gray wooden frame
that keeps me from joining nature
The top board fixates my mind
the crosshatch latticework
holds my vision down peripherally
like lines from an anxious balloon
the trees—
like waves of heat erupting into the balloon—
strain to break their anchoring lines
But the only movement is the anticipation of action
and the gentle bobbing of my eyes
testing their limits
struggling against equally massive forces
that overwhelm my reason and choice
and urge,
nay, compel, me to yield
But my identity is defined by that top board
Filling my forward vision
and bounding me in from both sides
My only release is in my mind

which flees my body to mingle with the stars
And soar around the universe,
above the clouds
And into the hearts and minds
of the world
While I sit in agonizing silence
dreaming
An unconscious consciousness
of escape and restraint

XII— 9/2/98 12:00 P.M.

Singing laughter
fills the air
Leaving me
without a care
Still alone
I see a light
coming toward me
Through the night
I am alone
but not afraid
Within my fate
new strands are laid
A happy voice
A silent song
Gives me hope
I wasn't wrong
I close my eyes
and drift to sleep
With a dream
I hope to keep
Until the dawn
I can't be sure
But I'll keep faith
Forevermore.

XIII— 9/24/98 9:00 P.M.

Pleasure Adrift
Sweet soothing sensation
felt in the air
and gentle touch
Opposing gnawing pain
inner anguish
ill health
Overwhelmed
And dispersed
With love and joy

XIV— 10/13/98

I am in love.
I see you across the room
and my heart races to embrace you
I close my eyes to still the beating
and sense you following the change
I stretch my mind to read your thoughts
But mystery surrounds them
Shrouding their secrets
behind a wall of innocent behavior
and acceptability
You pass near
and I bask in the wake of your presence
Electrified I dare to dream
But catch my leaping heart
before it escapes my chest

XV— WONDER 10/23 9:30 P.M.

What color are the leaves in your eyes?

I see yellows, reds, much green

Some sparsely covered trees,

Some still fully laden

Does the sky look blue to you?

I see white clouds dance across an azure floor

Serenaded by the rustling leaves

Invigorated by the sun's strobe
of white and gold

Long orange sunsets

framed with pinkish sky

Dazzling Day

draws to a close

leaving me in wonder—

wondering how the world looks to you.

XVI— FLUORESCENT DREAMS 10/23 9:30 P.M.

Psychedelic color filled motion
drifts across my conscious mind
unconsciously
I revel in the display
as I am swept along the flood
where I am going
I know not
nor care
Only hope in desperation
my destiny lies there.
Tired roaming weekend fears
surround me in my waking moments
weakening resolve
and teasing my imagination with fanciful delights
Aaaaiiee!
In mixing horror/fascination
comes the penultimate climax
pounding nerves
and greasy drumming fingers
keep the pulse flowing
jumping with anxious movement
through the night
through the day
Into the evolving time of memory
and glowing shards untouched
and untended
erupting on occasion
into flames

XVII— SEIZURE 11/8/98 8:30 P.M.

Sleep beckons a tired mind
and meets gentle reluctance
Fear stalks the silent corners of the waking mind
but yields to cautious rationality
Doubts linger
and an uncomfortable pressure builds in the head
resisting aspirin, caffeine and food.
“Sleep,” comes a whisper, “is the answer”
“Not yet,” is the quietly urgent reply.
The body is exhausted, but not weakened
The mind is in control
It takes careful note of all that occurs
and categorizes it
The mind is the source of strength
The headache is from the gear on gear
exertion of two days’ concern
and a lifetime of emotion
A devastating stranglehold is closing its grip
and forcing sleep,
But first this exploration of the shutdown
The seizure comes — then nothing more

XVIII— LORD, TOUCH MY HEART 11/10/98

Lord, touch my heart
and let me walk again
So many paths remain for me to trek
So many smiling faces yet to meet.

These days are long and lonely
Weary isolated vacant hallways
echoing with mingled hope and despair
A frightened child I willingly become
and lift a wavering prayer

Lord, touch my heart
free it from the cold clutches of dark thoughts
Give me the strength not just to stand
But to stride
Fill my weakened veins with meaning
and let me walk to your purpose

XIX— WHISPER 11/18/98

Whisper softly
to my delight
I read all details
in your eyes
Wind whistling gently
makes me smile
I'll linger awhile

Breath sweet with love
awakens my sleeping soul
And promises new hopes
New Dreams
New Love
to chase away my bile
I'll linger awhile

One hollow echo
reminds me of the past
Intruding briefly
on my solitude
Awakened layers
of sense and sentiment
come fast
and wash me through
with joy
and hope
and aching tender
threads of love
that sustain me every mile
I'll linger awhile

XX— SPLINTERED 12/24/98 12:15 A.M.

Love is a many splintered thing
one sliver is sweet and lush
But the remaining 99% are sharp with pain
The closest, most enticing shards
Shred the sanity
and rend the soul
Grieving eyes are pierced
on splinters mimicking sympathy

Cold, dry, calculating
The response becomes mechanical
The danger is avoided
By indiscriminate disregard
Pain is swallowed
Wounds bleed freely
Screams for mercy and compassion
Disappear in veiled, willful silence
No more – a voice speaks
And turns the key
Tightly locking
With finality
All entrances to the heart
Brick by brick the wall has been laid
And with a final resounding thud
The wall, and all retreat, is capped.
Good night,
Forever.

XXI— RING OUT THE OLD 12/30/98 10:30 P.M.

Ring out the old, ring in the new

I have seen 30 years creep by

and note the current gaining momentum

It is popular to consider the coming millennium

But the year remaining seems small next to what we have already seen.

When I was born this country was mourning MLK and RFK

While the Tet offensive had renewed our obsession with Vietnam

Today we are fighting some kind of ethereal debutante parlor war with Sadaam Hussein

Some things never change – wars continue under many guises

It has almost been 30 years since the last presidential impeachment.

And I'm supposed to believe the year 2000 is the end of the world?

Those doomsday Armageddon flicks I watched in church were in '78 not '98

Jim Jones, David Koresh – Six of one...

What will the new year bring?

Most likely, more of the same.

XXII— SPRING ETERNAL 2/7/99 9 A.M.

I feel a sudden urge today

to chase my winter blues away

to climb the highest hill and say

All cares take wing...

It must be spring

XXIII— MOMENT 2/8/99 7:30 A.M.

There will come a moment
somewhere in your life
when the world is all aglow
and everything seems right
If you let it get away
You will never know
the wonder of pure satisfaction
growing in your soul

XXIV— LAID TO REST 2/8/99 11:14 P.M.

The world mourned today
As King Hussein was laid to rest
From every corner of the globe
They came
Forgetting their differences
their disagreements
their petty problems
And stood in silence
At the side
of one they all held dear
Said a quiet prayer,
and passed on.
Clinton, Ford, Carter, Bush
Blair, Yeltsin, Havel
Iraq's vice president
Quadafi's son
Arafat, Netanyahu
And oh so many more
Suspending for a day
the weary robe of life
Lifting briefly the veil
Which conceals brotherhood
and peace and universal man

behind a segmented nightmare
of nationalist pride and fear
For today the world was truly one
And wept to lose a soldier of peace

But what will be the air we breathe tomorrow?
Will the mingled scent of universal cares
Carry home to disparate regions,
awaken deadened senses
And spark revival
of humanity
and unity
peace and love?
Or will war revive
and spread its dread
and wear its burden
on countless witless souls
Please God
Please Man
Remember
Remember soft words and silent prayer
Offered in salute
to fallen champions
of a greater good
a better world
And peace among men
Remember who is lost
and what is yet to be won
Stand not with downcast eyes
in humble dress
But raise your faces to your neighbors
And walk along together,
Hand in hand.

XXV— WEAKNESS 3/10/99

Weak of will I wandered
Through a maze of misconception
Spread my cheer for all to hear
Who smiled to see me coming
Now the days of joy grow short
As winter falls upon the soul
Shoots of spring are left exposed
And wither at the sudden frost
My fears are confirmed
All hope is lost
The silent shelter of the forest
Has become the pillared hall of death
Entombing me within
There are no ghosts to haunt me
No loved ones, no enemies
All thought, feeling and action
Have deserted me
And I stand in silence
Waiting

XXVI— DOWN 3/10/99 8:29 P.M.

Down through the forest
Runs the quick little brook
To the foot of this hill and that
As it makes its journey
Toward the lake past the farm
It gathers and widens till fat
Through the fields now it wanders
with no place to go
Feeding farm after farm with its touch
On its surface I drift
with its current my guide
And await what will come of my luck

XXVII— YOU ARE THERE

Each day
You are there
When I need you
Where
For everything
Touching and sweet
Seeing you reminds me I love
Hearing your voice reminds me of why
And so I continue
For you
Because I can
Because you are there.

XXVIII— WIND IN THE NIGHT

When the wind blows in the night
 I hear your voice
The glowing moon
 shines brilliant with your visage
The whispering branches overhead
 rustle rhythmically to the cadence of your smile
Under the banner of all creation
 we glide through this night of ours

XXIX— GROWING SEPARATION 4/13/99 12:19 P.M.

The days are growing longer
As is the distance between us
And the length of my face
Less contact, fewer words, no laughter
Why now? Why us?
Where did this come from?
Why must it go on?
I never saw it coming
the growing separation
cold and distant
Never felt the shift in the wind
But here we are
Out of sight, out of your mind
Slowly going out of mine
We knew the barriers were present
We understood how difficult and complex
any union would be
But I never wanted to see it go
Never wanted to let it
And seeing the dissipating dream
still don't
But I feel powerless to stop the change
And given budding leaves
am reluctant to hinder their growth
I feel like shit
But I would still rather fertilize
than poison, decay and be blown to all hell

XXX— BLUE 4/21/99 8:58 P.M.

Low and gentle blows the silent wind
stirring hope and healing aching wounds
There's a scent of joy that wafts on wings
held graciously aloft on careful strings

Touching hearts it makes its steady way
from man to woman and back throughout the day
Here bringing quiet cheer, there taking it away
Enveloping arms enfold each as it may

Carry me to the ceiling of the sky
to brush and touch the face of eternity
fill my soul with sweet enticing lies
then sweep me down to join the ill at ease

Wholeness comes through steady contemplation
Heart with heart, soul with mind, imagination
spread with contact through the human nation
in final glory unifies the grand equation

XXXI— ARROGANCE 4/21/99 9:22 P.M.

High above the world sits the lonely anger
spitting lightning down to every corner
“Yield all to me Supreme!” the bellowing cry
And sits there waiting for supplicants to comply.
Where did the anger all begin?
How does the being justify its right?
Why does it scream for obeisance through the night?
And spew its vitriol on all in sight?
It grew from jealous, petty thoughts
spread from a selfish, tired mind
That grew in decay until it broke its control
and expected attention to calm its raging soul

With sudden swiftness the masses fled for safety
under the burning gaze of growing fear
Until the only conscious thought remaining
was “me, my right, my duty”
and the lonely anger grows on empty landscapes
wearing out all hope of warm embrace
chasing away all life in his arrogant display
until he dies alone
and no one mourns the day

XXXII— DUST 4/21/99 9:36 P.M.

Dry, aching tired body
drawn and thirsty hugs the ground
tasting dust it lies in silence
stirring slightly at a sound
A muffled rumble in the distance
only wakes one for a time
then the pasty nightmare road
fills the open mouth with grime
watching through unmoistened eyes
regarding time that passes far too slowly
the dying spirit groans out one last time
then passes to complete the folly
No one hears the dying groan
No one covers the skin-stretched bones
Only time regards the day grown cold
and dust that brings its tidings to the fold

XXXIII— CAT 4/21/99 9:47 P.M.

Soft fur, gentle purr
warmth without desire
Each touch draws a string of cares
and sends it on its way
Visit for a brief exultant moment
leave your impression then be quickly gone
the lucky feline brings its magic potion
Heals then moves its mystic presence on

XXXIV— THE QUIET ENIGMA 4/23/99 NEAR MIDNIGHT

Side by side we sit in silence
While the world drifts slowly by
Nearly touching, never talking
Waiting for an answer why
Why so moody? Why so glum?
Why so callous toward your chums?
Why the distant gaze and look?
Why the words that fill your book?
Will you tell me if I ask?
Or retreat behind your mask?
I feel I'll never know
For even through the idle chatter
Lies a complex tale to show
But it runs without expression
Concealed by visages of woe.
Sometimes laughter fills your brow,
Bringing dimpled youthful cheer
But to soon the hardened look returns
To puzzle and confuse.
So we sit in silence side by side
Never showing what's inside

XXXV— SLIPPING INTO DARKNESS 4/26/99 11:15 P.M.

She slips into darkness
alone and unheard
Whispering, screeching
Grasping, reaching
Drawing into herself
out of fear
out of despair
out of need.
She misses the gentle touch
The welcome smile in my eyes
the pleasure of shared life
and love
But in the once-beautiful pasture
Now barren lies the season's seed
And with unspoken tears
She slides into her cave to bleed
Bleeding heart that has no salve
Bleeding soul that weeps and dies
Bleeding spirit leaves the world
And without peace or end
Throughout the universe it flies
Seeking
Ever seeking
Hoping
Ever dreaming
for one simple sign of presence
One touch to draw her back from absence
One smile, one wink
One hug
One kiss

XXXVI— MOON MAN 4/26/99 11:28 P.M.

From the sheltered parapet
One silent man the midnight
Moonlit night regards
In silver glowing stillness
Contemplating

Nothing moves out on the fields
Nothing stirs beneath the trees
Nothing breaks the utter quiet
Except the slow-drawn breath
of the witness

Looking for the moon
he sees no movement
Sighs and watching still
Lets his mind turn within
To race in contrast

Images come, pause and disappear
Fleeing in ghostlike form into the night
Happiness, Joy, Sadness and Loss
Dancing carelessly under the stars

Chasing fancies he turns away
Slips into sleep to dream and await the day
Speeding darkness on its way

Still seeing through clenched eyelids
Frolicking spirits spinning in the night.

XXXVII— A WALK IN THE WOODS 4/27/99 11:30 A.M.

Sitting in the glow of daylight
Under the quiet stillness of the noon hour
A thought comes to my mind

Across a short expanse of deck
And narrow expanse of lawn
A tiny wood begins
The thought comes strong
I want to take a walk in the woods
Yet I do not move.

Another thought arises
Until I set my feet within their bounds
I can never experience the wood

I look until the sun goes down
I can stand and pace toward and away
But it is not the same

As much beauty as the vision shows
As close as I can advance
I have not reached my goal.
I can walk to its edge
Look deep beneath its boughs
I can trace the edge of its contour
From one edge of the lawn to the next
I can feel the wind among the leaves
Hear the movement of life within
At certain times reach out and touch a branch
A leaf, or brush against a limb
I can absorb a beauty all its own
And still stand empty and alone.

For I have not taken a walk in the woods.

XXXVIII— LITTLE ONE 4/27/99 10:30 P.M.

Weak arms and legs jerk here and there
 And all I can do is smile
Large eyes wide search everywhere
 All I can do is smile
The more you move, the more still I become
The more widely you scan the room
 the more deeply I look in your eyes
And the wider I smile
I brush your tender face
Caress your soft, downy hair
Smile and stare
Free from care

XXXIX— RACE 4/27/99 10:40 P.M.

I have begun a race
And barely underway
am exhausted
But there is no relief
Before the finish
So I continue
Growling, complaining
Holding my tongue until it speaks on its own
I gather all the joy I know
and smile
To show I am not overcome
I run on and on
Hoping for my second wind

XL— STOP AND WONDER 4/27/99 10:45 P.M.

I stop to think and wonder
What will today bring?
What will I learn?
Will my hours be met with laughter or with tears?
Will I find a tonic for advancing years?
Or growing fears?

Though worn to bone by troubles great and small
I hold my head above it all
Take care for what I must
And thank my fortunes I have friends to trust

With help I'll last the day
Bear each concern as it comes my way
Tear down every barrier
Stand tall and say
"Behold Peace"
And scatter my dismay

XLI— BREAKNECK THOUGHTS 4/27/99 10:50 P.M.

Wired into an enormous unconscious
My mind slips along at breakneck speed
Considering problems beyond comprehension
From profound to mundane
Tripping light explosions on the wavelength of memory
Blasting star trails through the darkened sky
Burning truth into the brow of conscience
And spreading wildly my disease
The plague of truth and fearless joy.

XLII— MOON MAN 4/27/99 10:55 P.M.

The moon man stares through lightless air
Casting his glow on a sleeping world
Daring any trespassers to step forth
And challenge
None come
With growing pride he strides across the night
Peering into hearts of man and beast
Grinning with his crescent smile
at their misfortunes
Taunting them in their sleep
Brandishing his quiet dominance
O'er the night sky he marches
Pressing and depressing
While he waits the coming chase
For the dawn will banish every trace
of the moon man and his midnight embrace
When the sun arises with her glowing face
to warm and wake translucent wraiths
to bodies and life
And another sun-filled day
While the moon man lurks in shadows
Waiting for his nightly serenade

XLIII— SKYWARD 4/29/99 11:30 A.M.

Skyward, ever skyward
Let my eyes lift up
While the wind infuses my spirit
With strength and lifts my wings
Like a seagull on the shore
Waiting for the right gust of wind
To pick it straight up off the sand
And let it beat its way.

Skyward, ever skyward
Let my mind take wing
Gaze up and out
Through and beyond
To words and feelings
left for me to thrill among
across the universe

Upward, ever upward
Into the open air
Until I brush the face of eternity
Drink in its essence and descend
Swooping to earth intoxicated
with life, love and liberty

XLIV— SHE IS LOVED 5/3/99 11:30 P.M.

She stands alone
Raised above the crowd
Strong and resilient
Steel-cold and pure
And she is loved
Her court has been cast
her suitors spent
She has drawn her circle tight around her
And through it all
Unknowing
She is loved
Once joined in merry song
we danced our dreams away
And now the night has closed upon our mirth
She stands apart
But not in my heart
For through light and dark
She is loved
Unseen behind a shroud I stare
and revel in the vision fair
While she blooms in the midday air
Though cold should grip her
Where she stands
And leave her with an empty hand
Forever proudly she will stand
Unbent before the wind
For she is loved.

XLV— FOR A MOMENT 5/3/99 11:45 P.M.

Briefly, I thought, I am not alone
I found words that speak my heart
Love is the joy that fuels the soul
Not asking, not taking—
But always giving
To spread love and joy
And to enrich all men and women
From here to then and on
Far into the great night beyond
weaving mysteries grand
In eyes or in hands
From me to you
I am aglow with rapture
For I can see
the only time I am alone
is when I part with me.

XLVI— THE GAME 5/5/99 11:45 P.M.

Sometimes I play a game
Carefully we choose sides
Myself and those who'll play with me
We write our own rules
Follow our own directions
And lay a course
with hidden intent
that never seems fully revealed
Sometimes it is great fun
Sometimes it ruins the day
More often than not
the game leads us down
peculiar trails veiled in secrets
and mystery.
No one wins, no one loses
The game never ends,
just our daily turns
Until we stretch
Meaning into nonsense
And all run away
Panicked.

XLVII— AFTER HOURS 5/99

The First Hour

New to the lightless world of dreams
A lonely figure strides along a narrow street
Follow closely as he moves among the growing shadows
Drifting through time and space with careless ease

With sunset comes a subtle shift in sound
as car noises settle into passing flashes
Pulsing through the evening air
in bursts of light and sonic ripples

The birds grow still, the city shuts down
Offices go black, as does the sky
People look for shelter, move into their cells
Vacating the streets to melancholy and contemplation

Wired eyes scurry across blocks looking for appeasement
They drift into bars and clubs to soak up
Ballgames, conversation, liquor – filling their empty souls
with spiritual fat, while organs fight to bear the strain

Under a streetlight a young woman waits
She smokes a cigarette and looks nervously around
Until the light turns green, and the taxi pulls up to her curb
And whisks her off into the chill, damp air

Across another block, lights flare across the sky
Like homing signals to the nervous nightfolk
Who flock to view this week's big hit
Again, they yearn to feed their neural addiction

Yet there is that silent being slipping past the pitfalls
Gliding through half-lit doorways and empty streets
To some unseen destiny that attracts the observer
Where will he go, what will he find – and when

The Second Hour

There is another change occurring
As more cars leave the murky city's veins
And more people find their shelter
Movies play on, protecting their feeding fans
And malted men's melted minds meander
No children's voices can be heard at all
And what voices come are slurred and drawn
But the hero walks on undaunted
Drawn ever deeper into darkness
through the shadows
To his own inner light
growing within his mind.
Yet something is missing...

The Third Hour

Now in utter silence lie the streets
Empty and cold in an eerie half-light
Every building, car or object huddles
Coiled against some lurking menace
Clustered near working streetlamps
They whisper against their nightmares
And pray for the quick return of daylight.
This grim hour marks the boundary
Of the night – Evening games are long gone
And only night remains to fill the void
The only sounds are scattered clashes
down lonely, unlit alleyways
Between cats and cans, or other night animals
And over all the barren scene

in garish touch the waxing moon
Sheds its glow of cold death
And makes the nervous soul shudder
Yet against this canopy a silent figure stands
Stock still, staring at the starry sky
Looking into the face of the silver-white
Lady of the evening, and returning her solemn glare
For unlike cowards shielding themselves from terror
He gazes in wonder on the heavenly body
and feels a different sensation stirring within
Visions cloud his eyes with images divine
As words flood through his mind at bullet speed
A thousand dreams come to him in an instant
And the mysteries of life sing to his ears
Inspired he drops his eyes back to the sidewalk
As if responding to some secret nod
His feet begin to move and lead him on his way
to his moment's destiny within the city's heart

The Fourth Hour

Into sudden communion with eternity
the dreamer drifts along the city's avenues
Lighting hope fires in every passing window
Spreading dreams to sleepers everywhere
At one with all the sights and sounds
He slips unseen through silent streets
Weaving passages of love and exultation
Drawn from every passageway, every image met.
Bricks, Alleyways – narrow and dark
One-way streets, cobblestone sidewalks, crosswalks
Buildings, always buildings – granite, stone and steel
Cars, light poles, glass and window displays
The click of changing street lights
Walk/Don't Walk – Red/Green
The buzzing neon signs, the backlit security flares

cameras, police cruisers, car alarms
Red lights capping skyscrapers
The occasional cab or horn
Cat, dog or passerby
Each takes its place in the symphony of the city night
And under the wistful glow of moonshine
All fit together and seem just right

The Fifth Hour

The moon has traced its course across the sky
Leaving the wandering figure drained and weary
Making his way home to his small apartment
Where he pulls up to a desk
Takes pen in hand and writes out the night
The sounds, the names, the words
Pausing only now and then
to stare out the window at the sleeping beauty
to recall a location, or frame of mind.
The moon has left the sky
But also left its impression in the soul
of our meandering star—
Who looked into the face of mystery
and inspired filled a book with words and phrases
to recall the encounter
And plant it indelibly within the heart of the city
As much a part of every block
As the cement that binds the whole together
And with this final act of confirmation
Locks his fortunes into the nerve line of the city
Where he dreams of images imprinted on his mind
And images to be revealed tomorrow night
So turning in from studious gaze
He lays his pen down for the night
And goes to rendezvous with fortune
As it visits him inside his dreams tonight

XLVIII— ES IST FÜR SIE

Meines erachtens,
Sie sind sehr schön
Und für das
Ich liebe dich
Meines erachtens,
Sie sind sehr gut
Und für das
Ich liebe dich
Wann Sie habt mein Hand
Sie können mein Herz auch haben
Und für das
Ich liebe dich

XLIX— THIS ONE'S FOR YOU

Warm in the night
A subtle movement
Unseen, unheard
But sensed all the same
is felt
Across all time
its presence you could gauge
Running my fingers along your spine
Tracing your shoulder blades
From arm to arm
Drawing a gentle pressure
up your outstretched calf
with dexterous toes
And smoothing nervous knots
out of your tender torso
The warm breath of
eye-shut darkness breathes
its soothing power on your
outstretched neck
Pulls every heartache
free from bonds
And brings love to
the deepest, most forsaken
corner of your soul
This penetrating warmth
heals wounds long open
erases scars long held
And fills you through the days
to come with utter bliss.

L— MY STORY

Let me tell you my story
I am emotionally ravished
I sense openings
play my hand
And enlarge my stronghold
I wedge my foot in any emotional door,
then bring in bats, boards and boxes
to increase the pressure
and enlarge the entrance
Until I feel safe in entering
I overstep my bounds
I ask for too much
And expect to be given what I ask
I am genuine
Wanting love
bringing understanding,
compassion,
devotion,
and heartache
I will never leave
But at some point I think
that is what people want me to do
I understand the danger
the fear
the terror
and intimidation
So I conceal my emotion as best I can
And keep exchange light and easy,
but I can never retreat.
With dogged determination
I torment those I love
until they wither or leave
And hate myself for who I am

I would never intentionally
harm anyone
But I know how much pain
I can inflict with love
My wife distrusts me
My friends grow distant
And I go on
Waiting for another attraction
Another woman to fuel
my emotional fire
When all I want
is love
Passion and compassion
Faith and healing
A knowing look
a willing smile
and someone to share
my nightmares without fear
To ease me through the dark days
and play with me in the sun's rays
And grow with me always
And I with her.

LI— SUMMER WIND

On the summer wind beat wings of love
Working their way through torrents of despair
Gaining height while rain tears down
Until they rise above the clouds
To bask in sunlight undimmed by sullen air
Drying quickly the shimmering feathers
of emotion and personal expression
Until strengthened they beat on toward
the moon above and the stars beyond
Carrying untold passion to unknown heights

LII— WHAT IF 5/11/99 4:30 P.M.

What if I woke up one morning and decided to try
If I climbed out of bed intending to try
Not to follow down well-worn roads again
But break off into untamed woodlands
Forge a new path through the timeless ages
Open a whole new world to those who will follow me
Because they will come
Someday, Somewhere – They will come
Looking for a new answer, a new hope, a new heart
But too uncertain to choose a way for themselves
They will follow my path because it is less worn
Less traveled – they will follow until it becomes the main drag
Then some beleaguered soul will pause one day before an unkempt
road,
stare down its overgrown, rutted lanes
and wonder aloud – What if I decided to lead the way today?

LIII— NAKED 5/11/99 9:45 P.M.

Naked before the world I stand
To proclaim myself for all time
Across a clear expanse I shout
And watch in wonder as faces turn toward mine
The issues of my life are laid before me
Spread out for inspection
Labeled according to impact and relevance
While I subject myself to infinite scrutiny
“Beware my soul” I cry with rasping lungs
Long filled with mucus from disuse
“The poison will infect you all unless you run”
But the warning only draws attention
And curiosity-seekers slither in for kicks
Sickened with revulsion at where I’ve been
And what I’ve done, I wretch to ease my suffering
But the sound that greets my agony is laughter
And the sympathy I beg for brings derisive ridicule
“Fuck you” I spit in disgust, rotting within
And in an instant regain my passion
I have not come here to be debased
I have come to express myself
And with sudden joy break out in laughter
“You are the jesters – the petty clowns”
And with that release regained my poise
And heard no more the raucous noise
But felt only the wind on my face
And opened my eyes to behold the universe
Laid out before my outstretched arms
“Thank Jesus above,” I whispered to the void
And left forever the confines of my body
To race throughout time and space
With endless energy decrying ignorance
Futility and petty selfish deeds

with tremendous strength I spread my arms
to envelop the world with pure love
And Freedom, undiminished in the glare of reality.

LIV— STARS 5/11/99 11:10 P.M.

Oh sweet, glorious beauty
I went into the night and was uplifted
Against the darkened shadows of birch and oak
A flicker of light drew my focus to the sky.
Smiling I stared, turned and stared
Sat down and stared some more
There wasn't a cloud in the sky
But saying that seems an injustice
From every end of the horizon
Light shone out to me
And through the swaying tree limbs
winked their secret words my way
I briefly closed my eyes and soaked in their energy
So long desired, imagined
Yet so seldom seen
I gazed into the face of one star and spoke to it
of time and eternity and infinite thought
And through the dark distance between
felt acknowledgment – echoed by a chorus of glittering beacons
It sent shivers up my spine to commune with the universe
Wonderful shivers I'll spend a lifetime trying to emulate
But in a hidden recess of my mind
I think I know where I can sense that ecstatic feeling
With just a casual touch on my soul
For the greatest joys in life are shared

LV— SUDDEN SMILE 5/11/99 11:23 P.M.

In the darkest moments of my life
A sudden smile lights up my world
And resurrects me from the doldrums
Into which I regularly sink
The variant nature of these tender gestures
Takes me by surprise
And in a sad irony
It is only in relief from torment
That I see the depth of my anxieties
But the better part of falling down
Is taking your hand as you lift me to my feet

LVI— DREAMING OF HAPPINESS 5/11/99 11:26 P.M.

When I am alone
I am generally happy
I can turn out the lights
Turn down the music
Listen to the sounds
of darkness
and silence
And open my mind
to anyone I imagine
Though often I sing to my soul
This is a healing time
Necessary to wash anger
Fear, disappointment,
turmoil, and frustration
from every pore
To renew the inner peace
that drives the mind and body
To ease the despair
and isolation of waking time
And so I sit alone in darkness
Dreaming of your happiness
And writing out mine.

LVII— THE RAREST FLOWER 5/11/99 11:31 P.M.

The rarest flower withers at first sight
Its beauty lost to interpretation
Turning to dust before both eyes have seen it
I've witnessed this in person
With barely-reined excitement I turned to
drink in the nectar of a glorious blossom
In one instant I was blinded with untold beauty
which touched the epicenter of my heart
and sent it leaping to the stars
My mind evaporated into time
My body into space
My soul became one with the universe
And before my vision was restored
the delicate petal had turned to dust
and been blown into uncertain memory
I only recall the most beautiful words I've ever read
The sweetest taste ever to pass my lips
the bluest sky, the greenest grass
the deepest eyes I've ever lost myself within
For an instant we were one
then beauty vanished in a sudden gust
And I was left standing still
in stunned silence
Left only with that imprint on my mind's eye
To carry me to my life's end.

LVIII— THE MYSTERY OF MEMORY 5/11/99 11:41 P.M.

It is strange the visions that visit an aging mind.
While driving home I was reminded of my wife
Long years ago, standing with me waiting for a train
Making lighthearted conversation with intent to yield a crop
Everything about the moment stands clear in my mind
Thirteen years after the fact
And probably 10 since last recalled.
If that impressing,
How could I forget?
If that lasting,
Why so distant?
It was a sweet memory to have awakened
for it reminded my of why I fell in love,
and with whom.

LIX— ANOTHER DAY 5/11/99 11:45 P.M.

Another day I thought a different line
I felt much like a songbird caged
screeching endlessly for my freedom
As I tested every limit of my cell.
Beautiful bird, singing songs to thrill the soul
Yet never standing still for even one second
Lest escape escape me.

And what, I thought, would be my fate
If this songbird flew free!
A wry grin dealt me the uncomfortable reply,
Succinct and unwelcome – “You would die”
for despite the chattering
despite the flurry of motion
And all the calls for freedom
I am defined by the limits of my cage
the same walls that restrict my world
Offer me structure, support
A framework for survival
Yes, I want to fly
But what would I do when my arms grew tired?
Where would I roost?
How would I escape the hawk?
The cat or some boy with a rock?
Where would my next meal come from?
I realized with sadness
how unprepared I was to go free
And paused just once within my frenzied life
to look with gratitude upon my sanctuary walls

LX— A SONG 5/12/99 12:07 A.M.

I tried to speak your name today
But before I could it leapt away
I tried to take your hand today
But before I could it pulled away

I tried to look into your eyes
But they turned from me to my surprise
I tried to see through your disguise
But you turned from me to my surprise

So I sit alone and write
Waiting for you through the night
Dreams hold you within my sight
Waiting for you through the night

Through the hours I feel you near
Dreaming that you will appear
The sun that guides me through the year
Dreaming that you will appear

Though each night is long and dark
I know you keep me in your heart
We share a love that time won't part
I know I'll keep you in my heart

The music in my ears will never end
Because you bring me songs of hope again
And brightly through each day I'll wend
Because you sing to me of hope again

LXI— THOUGHT FOR THE DAY 5/12/99 5:00 P.M.

I don't want to play games
(what do you want)
I want to love and be loved
I want to touch you in places you expect and don't expect
I want to see your smile start in your eyes
and grow to hold your whole body in laughter
I want to taste the gentle curl of your lips
And breathe in the warmth of your body
I want to open my dreaming eyes to see your face
And bask in the sunlight of your eyes
I want to feel you move across the room,
and slide to intercept with gentle touch
(What will you do?)
(A laugh)
I will sit forever walled in silence
Drinking in the beauty you discard
I will keep you closely guarded in my heart
And dutifully tend to your needs
I will gain in service what I miss in union
And in the dampened flames
Still enjoy happiness from proximity
Aglow within
And wearing a dimpled smile upon my face

LXII— WANDERING EYE 5/12/99

The wandering eye casts its gaze
upon many distant shores
But no matter how long or far it scans
It never finds the home it searches for.

Like a pirate on the seven seas
It spans the globe for satisfaction
And like the pirate's lust for gold
It poisons itself upon the action.

LXIII— ON A DREAMY DAY

It is a dreamy day
Slow and easy
Warm and hazy
Tired arms prop
tired heads
While eyes look away
living through the window
in a distant sky
the radio keeps in stride
with its soothing strains
and paints a background serenade
Minute by minute
the time slips away

Drifting over trees
across oceans
of water and trees
Carried on in silence
by a summer breeze
To a distant rendezvous
on a distant strand
There to smile
inside my heart
While reaching
for your hand

LXIV— SADNESS

Nothing in the world disturbs me more than sadness
In a child's face, or a friend's
I lose my own stamina,
wishing I could help
I could touch the sad heart
and bring its joy to life
But to see such feeling
and not be able to do anything
makes me sad.
I am drawn to their discomfort
I look for some way to absorb their distress
to shoulder their troubles
and let them carry on their way
free from care.
But some sadness can't be carried
can't be lifted up and away
some sadness settles down into the soul
absorbed within as of a sponge
where it festers and decays
taking with it all life and love
This is the greatest concern to me
that permeating emotion that lies untouched
just beyond reach
Taking me in with it
So the only comfort I can bring
is dying too with sadness

LXV— JEWEL 5/13/99 11:20 P.M.

Holding motion in its light
The tiny jewel sparkles with delight
calling - red light, green light

From one corner of the room
It draws a player forth
Sends them straight across
to yet another broken soul
Then it plays its game
Flashing red, then green

Weary of the bitter taste
That greets my every move
I still sit waiting for direction
And the signal shining clear
So I can spring to action
and mingle with you for a moment
till the light turns red again.

LXVI— Low TIDE 5/15/99 10:40 P.M.

Some beauty lies within
out of sight
Beneath the surface
Growing, changing, thriving
Without ever being revealed
except at low tide
And then I stop and stare
at the wonders laid bare
Tracing every line
of rock and root
Where tree meets earth meets water
And the pains of life
and strains of dogged perseverance
are etched in every beautiful detail
locked away beneath the surface
until low tide.

LXVII— WAITING 5/16/99 9:00 P.M.

Standing in the dark
with only time to ease my mind
an empty building
is my silent companion
But I match it silence
Standing, waiting
Free to speak
Free to say what ears can't hear
What words don't form
When light or eager faces
Stand and hover by your side
Alone within a timeless world
Where minutes drift with hours
past cold, gray sentries
Not giving any heed
And leaning in the dark with
Racing mind
And turbulent unconscious
I strain to think of what to say
and what to do
and where I want to go
And when, and how
And always with who
But the wheels only spin
as the night disappears
paying silent farewell
to me and my endless
Waiting

LXVIII— AT LAST 5/16/99 9:10 P.M.

Not everything comes in black and white
The morning sun
Spring leaves
Grass
The daffodils
and lilacs
lady slippers and
summer roses
The glint in your eyes
the flush in your cheek
when you smile
So let the winter ash
of bleakness and despair
barren and cold
shake off your soul
and let me see the
color in your heart
shine through
at last

LXIX— LIZARD 5/16/99 11:00 P.M.

Lying cold in morning
After the long dark night
Slowly picking up its legs
And starting on its way
Across an open ground
Warming to the sun above
While looking all around
High and low
Near and far
for a rock to lie on
Trying this one and that
like a new cowboy hat
Until the noon day sun
reveals the perfect one
broad and smooth
just ahead
Only have to crawl upon
and let the heat seep
through its legs and belly
from one end of its body to the furthest
Letting all the pent-up energy
within the sun-drenched stone
radiate through
until the two are one
Under the afternoon sun.

LXX— WEAKNESS 5/17/99 9:25 P.M.

Through any woods you walk
Along any tended path
There grow trees young and old
From a distance all alike
Yet such a difference lies within
Some strong with health
Some weak with rot
Regard my eyes from your distance
And read the stamina within my soul
I smile a hard grin
won through years of practice
And hold it past natural endurance
But the skin-deep face
conceals my weakness
And like any hollow limb
I wait among a forest of trees
steady until met with a sudden blow
Then I will shatter from impact
And crumble to the floor in pieces

LXXI— TENDER THOUGHTS 5/17/99 9:30 P.M.

Tender thoughts keep me going
How I'll hold your hand
Cup your resting head within my arm
Send you silent signals with my eyes
But I also feel the pain you suffer
See the anxious looks and grimace to myself
Watch the lines draw down your face
grow deeper, longer
These moments age my heart
And tear my soul to shreds
For if by some slight touch
I could mend the tear
Slow the wear
I'd reach out and
Brush against your side
Take you in my eager arms
And flash a healing smile
To see warmth
Return to every part of you.

LXXII— STAND UP AND EXPLORE 5/18/99 11:40 A.M.

Trees, grass, the sky
All the sights and sounds
Are beautiful
I could sit and drink all day
of their pleasant presence
But through 50 feet of woods
down a 10 foot drop
There may be a train waiting
And think of the beauties
it could reveal
Not one tree, one hundred
Not two birds, but twenty
Not a grassy lawn,
But fields of green
and flowers
rivers, ponds, oceans
await
But not alone on the side of the hill
Within easy reach
They wait just out of sight
just out of sense
They wait for you—
for anyone who
will stand up and explore

LXXIII— DAYDREAMING 5/18/99 11:45 A.M.

Some things in life cannot be matched
the scent of freshly mown grass
The cool taste of a summer breeze
The songs of birds on a lazy afternoon
the warm kiss of a high sun
And all the memories of your face
Scattered through my mind
I've stared entranced while spring leaves dance
upon a steady breeze
Spent hours waiting for one cloud to leave the sky
Smiled with bare emotion at the world coming to life
Before my eyes
Sent my soul fluttering after yellow butterflies
across the lawn
or you slipping down the stairs and out of view
Peace of mind comes hard
And not with effort, but with patience
So too the pieces of your heart
So sweet the reward
Yet oh, so long the road
But nothing makes the passing sweeter
than watching the summer day drift by

LXXIV— REBIRTH 5/18/99 11:55 A.M.

For years my soul has stayed inside
Turning cold and gray
But with spring renewed it found a door
And stepped into the light of day
Weak from years of dark and gloom
It blinked its eyes and stood awhile
Then filled with warmth and sunlight
Broke into the grandest smile
Striding out into the midday air
With the bright step of a child
I embarked on a journey through the world
With fervor and ecstatic heart
Renewed I woke to summer life
and went my way with gracious ease
Gaining strength with every stride
Until I fell upon my knees
Before a vision of radiant beauty
Stretched before my in the sand
After long deliberation
I bent and offered her my hand
Together on into the day
Drinking in the joy of love
While the clouds so gaily frolicked
in the bright blue sky above

LXXV— RAIN 5/18/99

What is life
Without a little rain
A summer shower
to wash away all cares
And ease the daily strain
To soften my sadness
Refresh a tired step
Bathe the world with tonic
To right it on its way again
A misty night across the beach
Arms entwined beneath the damping drops
A seaward gaze into forever
Reflected in your eyes
Then home to dry before a fire
Long into the pitter-pattered frame of night
With thoughts of love and warmth
Until the glowing embers wane