

Now and Then



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Introduction

Every so often I run across another notebook with some of my poetry. Often this is mixed in with notes, research or journal entries, mostly because I have written poems whenever they occurred to me, and on whatever was handy.

These days I'm writing poems on Facebook, and gathering them once a month into a book. This month, at the end of the book, are some poems from 1990 and 1991.

And that's why the book is called Now and Then.

Kim Taylor, February 2022

Photographs taken in 2004 by Kim Taylor at Woodstock Ontario during a joint shoot.

Now: 2022

One Now

I close my eyes
to think of an opening line
and they stay closed
stubbornly, stickily closed

I so much want a nap
but it's the third
and I haven't written a poem
yet this month

We'll call it one
~~

Fairy Ring

That's a fairy ring she said
You mustn't step inside
or the queen will snatch you
and take you away from me

Would you come for me I said
Would you bring iron to hit her
and pull me away
take me out of the ring

I have told you not to go in
are you telling me you will
Are you telling me to rescue you
You risk a lot dear boy, a lot
~~



A Spider

A spider, just above her head
If I tell her, there will be panic
There will be noise
and the swinging of the arms

Best I say nothing
and watch as the spider
comes further down, spinning out
thread extending from its bum

Closer and closer, now on her hair
and still I say nothing
especially now, now that arms
will be swinging for her own head
~~

Once

How can it be
that once I watched the rain
fall on the asphalt
and turn instantly to steam

Dry as it was wet
the instant it was wet
How can such a thing be
when I watch the snow pile up

~~

Nothing Is Right

Nothing is right
everything is wrong
and here I lie in bed
eyes closed
but not sleeping

I must sleep
tomorrow I work
but she has gone

Nothing is right
everything is wrong

Tomorrow I work
but for no reason
She is gone

I lie in bed alone
eyes closed
Nothing is right
everything is wrong
~~

Somewhere Between

Somewhere between the light
and the darkness, the ghosts

Turn off the light
and watch
there, do you see them

Are they ghosts or demons
Who can tell

They only exist
between the light and the darkness

~~

The Day

The day we were in the shower
and she handed me the shampoo
and she turned her back
and waited

The day she came in
while I was shaving
and she held out her hand
and waited

What are these small things
we do for each other
These small trusts
we give each other
~~

That Shaman

That Shaman hoo boy
he got some ego on him

Think boy think
you wanna go half way
between here and the spirits
You wanna say um and er
to them that can take you away
Best you got some ego on you
Don't you think

~~

Off

Off it takes
that bird that was floating

The wings spread wide
and slammed down hard
the body lifting out slow

pairs of rings spread
further and further along
until the bird eats the air
and the water is forgotten

~~

Firepower

Where life is cheap
death is easy

So many cousins
so many strangers
killed every day
and nobody bothers
to keep count

We all got firepower
be a shame not to use it

It sits by the easy chair
let's hope someone comes
I can snatch and shoot
in three seconds

I've practised
Maybe today
~~

Flash of White

I was in the bath
and never heard her come in
Perhaps my ears were under water
perhaps she moved without sound

From the corner of my eye
a flash of white
a long flowing gown
and it was gone

I left the tub and dried myself
I put on my pants
I walked out and looked around
there, a flash of white

I followed, but there was no one there
nobody, the room was empty
but the other door
was slowly swinging shut

I ran to the door
and threw it open
a flash of white
moving around the corner

As I walked to the corner
only to see nothing
a hand dropped onto my shoulder
and another to my waist

I turned, to be enfolded
by her gentle embrace
her silken gown
swirling around us
~~

Grease Monkey

Ripped jeans
before they were in fashion
She was a working kid
grease on her nose
and a wrench in her hand

My father's car was expensive
like his watch
and his hat
He pulled into the garage
and waved her over

Check it, he said
That's it, just an order
We got out, he went to his bank
and I didn't
I said "I'm sorry..."

She waved it away
and started the car
Yes, she said, that's it
and she popped the hood
She leaned in with a wrench

Tinkered a bit
and wiped her hands on a rag
She nodded to me
and turned to go
"Wait," I said
~~

The Saddest Moment

She sang softly to herself
sitting on the breakwater
where no one could hear
but I heard

I crept toward her
and when I saw her
I moved behind her
so she wouldn't see me

I walked silently
as close as I dared
and then stood listening

I had never heard such a thing
as she sang to herself
Angels would sound like that
Bright coloured birds like that

I stepped to the side
and kicked a rock

She turned her head
she saw me standing there
she dropped her eyes
dropped her head
and she stopped

The saddest moment of my life
She stopped

~~

The Bouncer

The place was empty
the customers gone home
and I was picking up empties
and wiping down tables

The chairs were lifted
and I was mopping the floor
when she walked into the bar

She was a new waitress
and she wasn't sure what to do
When she spotted me
I told her to go home
locking up was my job

Instead of leaving
she went to the jukebox
and dropped in a coin
It was a nice dance tune
and she came over to me
took my hand
and we danced

When we finished
she stroked my cheek
and left the bar
I didn't have the heart to tell her
the jukebox was broken

~~



The Waves Rolled

The waves rolled in and out
leaving twigs and things
in lines on the sand

I watched them roll in and out
and I saw the ripples of sand
for as far as I could see
until they blurred into one
under the water

I listened to the wash
wash wash
of the waves
as they rolled in and out

and the occasional cry
of a seagull
as the wash wash wash
came in and out

until I felt a gentle hand
on my shoulder

~~

She Stared

She stood at the end of the dock
staring so hard
I thought she would burn the fog away

The tears from her eyes
fell onto the dock
and rolled into the lake

She stared so hard
I thought she would see forever
I looked at her
I saw the wedding band
as she stared so hard
I thought she would burn the lighthouse down

and her tears fell
I stepped toward her
a woman grabbed my arm
and said to me

Her man is late
his boat is missing
She won't hear you
~~

Boot Prints

A snowy hill
and a stream at the bottom

The ice was broken
and there was an upturned toboggan
at the bottom of the hill

I ran
as I got to the toboggan
looking into the water
I happened to look down

There were boot prints
leading away from the toboggan
two pairs

I took the rope
and pulled the toboggan home
~~

We Would Wait

We would wait
my friends and I
for her to get off work
and we would watch
as she walked home

A line of small boys
she never looked
but once, just once
I swear I saw
a tiny smile

~~



Summer Tan

I rode my bike
to the end of the road
then followed the rocks
until I could go no further

If I sat on the edge
I could just barely see
the strip of beach

She would be there
working on her summer tan
I would take off my shirt
and hug my knees
and work on my summer tan
~~

Two Years

Two years I searched for her
following every thread
pulling each until it broke

and then one night
I saw her
across the street
I stood still
I watched her, in the cafe

she never looked up
she never saw me in the rain
and I stood still
watching her in that cafe

I watched her
until she left
and I stood still

~~

Chance Meeting

She came out of the store
and walked straight into me

Oh
Not a problem, are you all right

And between those words
I loved her
we lived a long life
and then she was gone

~~



Across the Lane

Across the alley
across the lane
in the snow
on the fire escape

there she is
bare feet and t-shirt
Locked out again
by her old man

There she is
on the fire escape
dancing to the music
coming from her place

Come on baby
let me back in
it's cold out here
the metal sticks to my feet
let me back in
~~

Baby I'm Lost

Baby when I'm not with you
I don't know what to do
I need you so much
why do you go where you go

Baby when I'm with you
I don't need anything at all
We'll do what you do
and I'm happy to be with you

Baby where did you go
I don't know why you left
when are you coming back
Baby I'm lost without you
~~

Can't Be Real

His hands shake a little
as he strokes her cheek
an old man
with a trophy at his side

It can't be real
No matter how smart he is
She can't be smart
Does he have money
of course he does
How else that girl

and when he touches her cheek
she smiles at him
It can't be real
~~

Into a Blur

I could not see her
she was out of focus
it might have been the tears
in my eyes

She told me she was leaving
and she faded
her sharp eyes, her delicate mouth
faded into a blur

~~

A Shy Smile

She sat with her back to the wall
pulled her bare feet up
and hugged her legs

She looked up when I came into the room
and gave a shy smile

slowly she moved her hands
to her thighs

and she slowly lifted her skirt
up her calves
toward her knees

~~

Old

I wish I was old, he said
so that I would already have spent
my entire life with you

I wish there were decades
of love and hate and boredom
between you and I

so that this separation, this ending
was my ending
and there would be no more time

for me to miss you
for me to forget you

~~

She Walked

She walked through the streets
rehearsing what she would say to him

The people passing turned
wondering if she were talking to them
but she walked on
and as she walked
she got further away from him

~~

The Snow

The snow came down
as if it would come forever
burying the city
in a white, crisp blanket

I thought about her
and how long she had been gone
and I realized my heart
had been slowly buried
day after day

as if, like this snow
it would cover me, bury me

until I was no longer here

~~

The Paint Cracked

The window wall was chipped
the paint cracked and peeling
the sill was half rotted
and the dust was settled deep

but still she leaned out that window
hoping to catch a glimpse
as he walked down the street
toward her

~~

The Towel

He lay in the surf
a towel over his head
and she found him that way

She snatched the towel away
and said "What are you thinking"
and he replied

"When I was in the prison
I thought, this is how I will kill myself
as they did this to me"

No, this you will not do
do you hear me you damaged man
You belong to me
and you will not drown yourself

He did not reach for the towel
in her hand

~~

Primary

She was primary colours
no shades
no grey
Just pure blinding colour

Red for when she was angry
Green for when she was calm
and Blue for when she loved me

~~



Lights

All night I watched
and all night
there was only one car

I watched it as a pinprick light
watched as it split into two
and then the flash of a face
a beautiful face to make me dream

and it was gone
red lights fall away
down the road
two lights become one
and fade into the distance

and I am alone again
~~

We Drove

We drove as long
and as far as we could
before we pulled over
and slept in the car

We woke at dawn
the sun behind us
the shadow of our car
sharp on the road
half a mile long

Silently you started the car
and we pulled out
onto that road again

~~

The Pirate

When we met
you warned me
and I thought
"she has the heart of a pirate"

but I ignored both of us
and I loved you
and maybe you loved me
and one day you left

and stole my love away
~~

Bear Woman

Bear woman
you come up the stairs
to my bed

So heavy is your tread
that I count them
one two three

and when you reach the top
Bear woman
I hear every step
across the floor

as you come to my bed
~~

She Stretches

Hands above her head
she sways back and forth

speaking nonsense
speaking gibberish
as she stretches

her eyes squeezed
and a smile
It makes me smile

~~

We Got Drunk

We got drunk on cheap wine
One of those gallon jugs
all we could afford

It came from California
and we closed our eyes
and described the waves
the sand on the beach
to each other

so we could forget the cruel wind
blowing through the cracks
in our window

And we were warm and safe
in each other's arms

~~

Between

I remember the start
and I remember you walking out
but forty years on

I remember saying hello
and I remember saying goodbye
but forty years on

I try, I reach, I try
but I can't remember
what came between

~~



The Killer

They say, if you look into the eyes
of a dead man
you can see the killer

Look into my cold dead eyes my love
look closely
can you see who killed my hopes and dreams
~~

Aggie Pub

1978 and the aggies
are dancing the pogo polka
and I'm dating someone
but I can't remember who

but there I was alone
bouncing my head of hair
I had hair then
listening to Walter
and watching the pogo polka

~~

The Fence

She would run barefoot across the meadow
and wait for him at the fence

He would come as soon as he could
and they would meet there
at the fence

She was fourteen
he was seventeen
and they thought they were in love

~~

Taxi

She sat in the back of a taxi
wet hair flat on her head
water running down her shoulders
shaking with the chill of it

Or was it something else
was she with him
and did he tell her yet again
to go home

Closing the door in her face
not quickly, not angrily
but slowly, inevitably

~~

The Hum

He drove between the power lines
two on each side of the road
coming from the nuclear plant
As was he

The weekend off
to go home to see her
and as he drove
he could almost hear the lines hum

he could feel the tires
tread on the road, in tune with the hum
and he thought
I wonder if she'll be there this time
~~

Waiting

He sat in a dark hotel room
looking out the window

hoping that one more time
he would see her walking
down that too long street
in that shadow-strewn twilight
the sun weaker than the windows

He, weaker than a babe
Waiting
~~

The Lights Come On

They sat together on the dock
across the bay from the village
watching the lights come on
in their small houses

They knew who was working
Who was rich
and who waited
until they couldn't see the dishes
before they reached for the switch

~~

All Grown Up

She wanted so much to be grown
she dressed in her mother's gown
and in too-large shoes
she ran down the lane
to where her sister was working

The men all laughed
as she came through the door
and her sister, hiding her face
rushed her back out again
saying go home child
this is not what you think it is

~~

The Soldiers

They walked across the field
the soldiers

She had seen them come and go
and come again

First one side
then the other
and there was no difference

She sat quietly and waited
for them to arrive

Never a difference
one side
or the other
~~

Looking for You

Once again I search my books
and I consider looking
in my old journals

but I know you're not there
I want to write your story
You so much deserve that
but I cannot find you

A few stories
is that all we have
for three years together

a few stories
enough for a poem or two

Oh my memory, my faulty past
that I cannot find you there

~~

An Hour Before Dawn

A cab, drifting down an empty street
an hour before dawn
an hour to get back to her bed
pretending she had been there
all the night before

She thinks of him
the other one
and wonders if he woke
when she left
and if he will miss her with the sun
~~

Labyrinth

There is a labyrinth of cedar
let us go there
and get lost in the middle
and we will pretend

There is no one for me
and no one for you
that we are alone in the world
and I will tell you there
how much I love you

~~



Somewhere

She rode with him
in the back of the truck
they were wrapped
in his sleeping bag
and they were going somewhere

It didn't matter
as long as it was somewhere else

The road was long and dusty
it was short and icy
it was there
and they had thumbs
and as long as they could
they rode

~~

In A Manila Folder

Everything she had owned
everything she was
in a manila folder
and in the wind
from the back of the ferry
it all scattered
into the sea

~~

Not Yet Time

She opened the cabin door
and gazed out at the rising sun

He slept on

She watched the sun become round
detach from the water
and begin to rise

She turned, gazed at the kitchen
and decided once again
that it was not yet time

~~

Both There

He came home from the bar
and they were both there

He didn't say a word
just sat on the couch
and waited for what would come
~~

How Far

She packed her bags
and waited by the curb
When a car stopped she leaned in
"How far are you going?"

A woman in a white convertible
said "as far as I can drive"
and so she threw her bags
into the back seat
and got in saying "me too"

~~

The Last Train

It was the last train of the day
the last boat of the season

and he watched it go
wondering if he would ever
see her again

Knowing he would not

~~



A Full Moon

A full moon
and she opened her window
to feel the breeze on her face
her hair tickling her back

She looked over the fields
the moon shining on the dew
and she thought of the city
far away, in that direction

"I could follow the moon
that path in the dew
I'll take a few things"
as a cloud removed the path
~~

Always Handsome

She saw in technicolour
Greens and Blues

and always backlit
so that he was always handsome

even if his mother thought
he looked a bit like a toad

~~

Bags Half Packed

At the end of a long hallway
she sat on the edge of her bed

a telephone to her ear
her bags half packed
and she was crying

I wanted to go to her
but it wasn't me
she was waiting for

~~

Shrouded in the Dark

She was shrouded in the dark

I watched
willing her to step forward
into the light

so that I could see that perfect face
one more time

~~

The Little Train

I rode with my mother
on the little tourist train
from Port Stanley to Union
and she smiled

at the scenery slowly passing
at my children sitting with her
and at Brenda and I

She smiled
and I was happy
to give her this day
I had given her so little

~~

The Dare

She stood under a waterfall
the water just missing her hair
and she pulled me near

looked at me in a dare
to kiss her hard
and make her hair wet
~~

His Hand

They walked most of the afternoon
climbing the hill
scrambling up the feint path

When they reached the top
they stood and looked
over the valley to the ocean

The clouds split
and a sun-ray speared the town

She reached for his hand

~~

The Talk

Unable to speak to each other
inside their apartment

They sat in the windows
and talked, heads outside
for hours, sharing their dreams

Dreams that somehow faded
when they stepped back inside

~~

She Was Late

She ran by moonlight
through the apple orchard
the light stippled on the grass
like so many puddles
she splashed through

On the other side
he was waiting
with blanket and wine
and she was late

~~



July Fireworks

Half drunk on cheap wine
she sat apart from the others
leaned back on her hands
and watched the July fireworks
stream across the sky

This was the year she graduated
this was the year she left home
The world called
and she wanted to answer
Her life was exploding outward

~~

No More Than This

She wants no more than this

a stranger, met on the dance floor
her ass on a sink
him between her legs

and afterward, he will leave
and she, checking her makeup
will go back to the floor

~~

She Bites

She floats in the corner
of the pool
and he moves to her

looking at the others
he reaches around
finds her legs
and finds her crotch

She moves her head forward
just a little
and as she comes
she bites into his shoulder

red blood disappearing
into the water around them
~~

At Dawn

Riding her bicycle home
through deserted streets
lights reflecting in the water
on the road, a fresh rain

He said she could stay
but he was new
and she was new
and so she said "I must go"

As she rides
she smells the fresh rain
and she smells his sweat again
as he fell into her

And she grips the handlebars
tight, as she gripped his arms
~~

Thrown Out Once More

I walked alone
through an empty parking lot

Thrown out once more
from her place
from her bed

No choice but to go home
feeling empty
feeling alone

And here
here come the cops
"What are you doing here"
"Why are you out so late"

And maybe I will get an hour
before I have to go to class
And maybe by noon
I will sober up
~~

Four AM

Four am in August
just after a rain
on the streets of Guelph

Walking somewhere
just keep going
there is always somewhere

A park bench
a picnic table
The booze will keep me warm
~~



Galvanized Tub

When I was a kid
we bathed in a galvanized tub
and I thought it pretty poor
I mean, we couldn't afford a tub

But then she filled that tin
with water from the kettle
and put in those long naked legs
folded them up and sighed

As the steam rose about her chestnut hair
I thought myself a rich man indeed
to have a galvanized tub

~~

Linoleum Floor

My mother was so proud
of that chequerboard linoleum floor

Not because it was pretty
The wood was nicer
Not because it was warm
Linoleum on cement

But because finally
she could clean her kitchen floor

~~

Trio

They were a trio singing at the bar
and on a break I met them
buy us a drink they said
You look cute they said
Do you like us, they said

I liked them and I turned,
the one on the right was leaning in
Can I take you to bed I said

No you can't take me to bed
We're a trio she said

Oh, I said feeling down
OH, I said catching on
~~

The Writer

So many books lost
between half asleep
and the toilet

So many lovely plots
pissed down the drain
~~



Red Umbrella

Bright red umbrella
sliding across the ice
of a frozen pond

Long gone into the bush
by the time she noticed
it had blown off the dock

As it slid away from her
she wished she had a camera
it looked so good

~~

New Hat

A brand new straw hat
and a cotton dress

She had no place to go
no place to show off

so she walked through the fields
twirling her dress
above the wheat stubble
saying

"How do you like my new hat"

~~

Frozen Beach

Across that frozen beach
wisps of snow, blown
by a biting wind
and he stood watching
first one line
then another

Snow whipping across his shoes
he watched it split and rejoin
and thought perhaps
he would lie down on the sand
and never get up

~~

Pixie Boots

Long red hair
loose in the breeze

A chequed shirt
and pixie boots

She sat on the dock
and looked at the lake

How I wished
I had the courage
to talk to her

~~

Back to the Sky

Dead flat water
with a red sunset

She stood ankle deep
and there was not a ripple
around her feet

How long had she been there
so still, so silent
her back to the sky

~~

White Rock

I walk out into the ocean
from a sand beach
and turn to look
at the hillside

Covered from side to side
and bottom to top
with cottage windows

So many people
owning a tiny patch of ground
and a view.

~~

Un-Heedful

An early morning walk
along a deserted beach
and there, in the window
she watches, naked
and stretches, un-heedful
of a young boy
making footprints in wet sand

~~

Good Morning

The bedroom balcony
facing the lake

Bent over the rail
she calls a greeting
to the neighbour

Go-o-od mo-o-rn-ing

And her husband behind
gives a jolly wave

~~



From Europe

Wrapped round with a blanket
she stood on the rocks
and gazed out to the sea

Waves pounding in from Europe
spraying high above her head
She stands un-moving

waiting

~~

Gods That Cried

Ah, for the Norse Gods
Gods to drink with
Gods that fought
and died with you

Gods that knew
what it was
to be human
Gods that cried

~~

Early Morning Groceries

In the grocery line
a horsewoman
toque with pompom
complicated eyes
above a mask
and leggings
intended for riding
covering a tight, tight ass
and long legs
tucked into knee high boots
And that voice
that deep velvet voice

Forty years ago
I had a horsewoman
and I was there
with her once more
With those steel grey eyes
and long, strong legs
and that deep, velvet voice
I looked again at this girl
as she paid and left
and I thought
"If I was forty years younger"

~~

Bright Eyes

Dark, it was black in that room
except for a stray bit
of moonlight
Glinting off of her glasses
she looked like a giant insect
just a shape
and huge bright eyes

~~

Caged Bird

Gorgeous room, lush
money dripping from every surface
and her, she was the best
so perfect in every way

So why
did my attention wander
to the corner
and the caged bird

~~

Fifth Drip

On the fifth drip I thought
that's when I'll do it
and so I counted
drip after drip
until four
and I waited
~~

The Model

She showed up that day
to the studio

I had plans
I had things I wanted to shoot

She showed up to the studio
with a huge snake

~~



Summer Room

The room was light
one of the windows open
and a sheer curtain moved
in the light breeze

I walked to the window
and looked out over the sea
A hot day, that breeze, salt-scented
felt good on my skin

I turned, and she was there
I hadn't noticed as I walked in
She smiled lazily
and motioned to me

~~

This is Where

This is where she played the piano
just under the shattered window
and there, the lamp she loved so well
smashed and kicked into the corner

I loved her for thirty years
In this place we called home
until someone wanted a war
and I was somewhere else, fighting

~~

Winter

Winter
you have left me nothing
no pleasant days
no lovely walks

Nothing but a cold shoulder
and a cold ass
~~

Rewards of War

They took her
from the hospital
and made her climb
high up into the apartment tower

There they made her give birth
over the railing
and when the baby stuck
and when the girl screamed
they cut the cord

There, they said
all better, they said
and they laid her down
on that dirty mattress

~~

A Beard

I should be an old man
she said
with an old man's beard
so that when I think
I can stroke my beard
instead of my chin
and by that beard
men will know that I am wise

~~



A Kindness

In the museum
they showed us,
children from the country
A display of the senses

A grotesque figure
with horrific mouth
and gigantic hands
with tiny body

And we country children
wondered at the figure

Wondered that it hadn't been drowned
like you would drown a poor calf
that was born to that
As a kindness

~~

How Many

How many poems
make a book

how many words
for a novella
and for a novel

Do we need to consider
category

or where it will be read
after all, a summer beach read
must be at least 1.45 inches wide

preferably three
~~

Her Mother's Book

She opened her mother's book
and a photograph dropped out
it was of a boy
who would be dead now
but then, he was cute

Was this a high school flame
a crush perhaps
or the father of a forgotten sister
passed on to a relative
to be raised as their own

Or perhaps a movie star
admired enough to write
and ask for a photo
answered by someone
whose job was to stuff photos
into envelopes

Perhaps the request
was for a woman
and a man was sent instead
Was this photo always a bookmark
or did it become one
through long years of forgetting

~~

Bubble Days

Is there an absolute limit
in the years of a tyrant
before they go insane

How many decades
and does it vary
with the number of sycophants

How long for your average dictator
given no connection outside his palace
to begin to live inside his own head

~~

Straw Doll

A straw-stuffed doll
all her mother could afford
all the child had
and each night she hugged it

and each morning I saw the child
walking past the shop
with pin-pricks of red
across her face and neck

~~

The Office Worker

He arrived for work on his first day
to find an empty office
and a desk

a chair
and a typewriter
with a single piece of paper
and "Write" across the top

He worked there
for twenty-five years
until he retired

~~



How To Live

I make a note
of when I finish eating
and then I must wait
for two hours

take my two pills
and wait another hour
before eating anything

It is by routine
that we live

~~

The Porch Light

I turn the porch light on
because it's dark
and as I do I think
"if she visits tonight
she won't stumble"

She will not know where I live
and it's been 40 years
but my mind is ever hopeful
and I want the porch light on

~~

The Yucca Flower

A lone flower stalk
from the Yucca plant
standing above
the deep snow

There is a light
casting its shadow
across the whiteness

~~

Then: 1990, 1991

These poems were found in a book full of martial arts notes. I had a habit of writing them anywhere at all. Here are a few.

Brautigan's Books

You should read
Richard Brautigan's books
twice

Once when he is alive
and once
when he is dead
~~



Sweaty Nights

The old sweaty nights
don't move through my thoughts
like they once did

It feels somehow disloyal
rude
unappreciative
That I have trouble remembering
the women I slept with
so long ago

Do they remember me?
It doesn't matter now
It didn't then

~~

Looking Back

Looking back
I can't find anyone
to hate
I can't find anyone
to dislike
Yet
thinking about it
I have reasons for both

I suppose
According to Modern Research
this makes me neurotic
or something
~~

One Generation

It was so easy for us
You liked each other
you had sex

No problems with
other partners
no worries about
pregnancy
or incurable diseases

For one generation
there was no guilt
no fear
~~

If I Have a Daughter

For how many centuries
have women held their tears
until the ships
were out to sea

Now there are men at home
who must learn
to hold their feelings inside

Now there are women
who sail to war
~~

Somewhere Over Quebec

I am nowhere
far from home

I look up
somewhere over Quebec
on the way to Europe
and see someone
who lives down the street

~~

Brenda

Flying to England
looking through the catalogue

Duty free

shiny jewellery

fine perfume

I miss you already

~~

Misplaced

Where
even on a 747
could they misplace
a passenger

~~

Out the Window

The captain tells us
we are over the coast
of New Brunswick

We all look
It's black out
~~



Outside St. Louis du Ha Ha

Outside the window
of my room
The late afternoon sun
makes the powerlines shine
Spiderwebs into the distance

The Trans-Canada highway
has a golden glow
Dotted with cars
carrying people from far away
past my house

I dream of the Grande Portage
moving down the St. Lawrence
around the lakes
across the great plains and
through the mountains to the coast

I dream of moving free
like those voyageurs of my past
deeply through the heart of my country

I've got to get out of this town
before my country shrinks
and ends over the hills
with the portage
Not even reaching the lakes

~~

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EJMAS (monthly) - 2000-2017

<https://ejmas.com/>