

# Some Girls



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# Table of Contents

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Some Girls.....                     | 1  |
| Introduction.....                   | 2  |
| Will she, Won't She.....            | 4  |
| Lorna.....                          | 6  |
| Under The Covers.....               | 9  |
| Macondo Books.....                  | 10 |
| Scratch.....                        | 11 |
| November Wind.....                  | 12 |
| Your Ghost.....                     | 13 |
| Strangers.....                      | 14 |
| I Don't Remember That.....          | 15 |
| In An Old Letter.....               | 16 |
| Nostalgie.....                      | 17 |
| I Measure My Life.....              | 18 |
| No-Man's Land.....                  | 18 |
| Night Sweats.....                   | 19 |
| Johnston Green.....                 | 20 |
| A Secret.....                       | 22 |
| A Nipple.....                       | 22 |
| A Bear.....                         | 23 |
| A Look.....                         | 24 |
| A Story.....                        | 26 |
| Just One.....                       | 27 |
| Fifteen.....                        | 28 |
| Pizzle.....                         | 29 |
| You Become Strange.....             | 29 |
| Eunice.....                         | 30 |
| Not A Poem.....                     | 32 |
| A Spanking.....                     | 33 |
| The Old Man With A Broken Neck..... | 34 |
| Dorey.....                          | 35 |

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| A Companion.....              | 36 |
| The Alaska Ferry.....         | 37 |
| Black Box.....                | 38 |
| Late for Breakfast.....       | 39 |
| Again Again.....              | 40 |
| A Line.....                   | 41 |
| The Longer I Look at You..... | 42 |
| I Can't Remember.....         | 43 |
| What I Remember.....          | 44 |
| In The Stairwell.....         | 45 |
| The Very Instant.....         | 46 |
| My Thoughts.....              | 47 |
| Brenda's Car.....             | 49 |
| I Heard Wrong.....            | 50 |
| How Much Longer.....          | 51 |
| Not 20 Any More.....          | 52 |
| Pay Attention To Me.....      | 53 |
| We Drift.....                 | 54 |
| Got a Job to Do.....          | 55 |
| Her Boyfriend is Big.....     | 56 |
| When She Said Yes.....        | 57 |
| Glasses.....                  | 58 |
| Lorna Moved In.....           | 59 |
| At The Nudie-Bar.....         | 60 |
| Waiting.....                  | 61 |
| Sticky.....                   | 62 |
| For Her.....                  | 62 |
| Hard Week.....                | 63 |
| Lorna Makes Room.....         | 64 |
| Coping With A Pandemic.....   | 65 |
| You Can Feel a Smile.....     | 66 |
| Never Met the Folks.....      | 67 |
| The May December Cycle.....   | 68 |
| That Old Coot.....            | 69 |

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| A Few Hours.....          | 70  |
| Messy Writing.....        | 71  |
| Big Salty Tears.....      | 72  |
| We Split the Cooking..... | 73  |
| About the Sex.....        | 74  |
| In My Shadow.....         | 75  |
| Daily Walk.....           | 76  |
| He Snored.....            | 77  |
| She Bounced.....          | 78  |
| What I Give Her.....      | 79  |
| As Good As Sex.....       | 80  |
| Once a Week.....          | 81  |
| I Get Him.....            | 82  |
| We Get Along.....         | 83  |
| Plenty of Time.....       | 84  |
| Time to Kick Her Out..... | 85  |
| He Left.....              | 86  |
| She Was Older.....        | 87  |
| I Played a Jock.....      | 89  |
| Life Model.....           | 90  |
| Suzi and Eunice.....      | 91  |
| It's OK.....              | 92  |
| In Trouble Again.....     | 93  |
| As It Turned Out.....     | 94  |
| Closing Up.....           | 95  |
| Good Company.....         | 96  |
| Just Past Dawn.....       | 97  |
| No Drama For Stories..... | 98  |
| Your Sorry Ass.....       | 100 |
| She Wanted to Fly.....    | 101 |
| Say It Plain.....         | 102 |
| Weed Whip.....            | 103 |
| Illiterate.....           | 104 |
| She Read Me.....          | 105 |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| A Reason.....                | 106 |
| I Learned a Thing.....       | 107 |
| Something-phile.....         | 108 |
| Not Today.....               | 109 |
| Testosterone.....            | 110 |
| Once Again.....              | 110 |
| Her Long Long Hair.....      | 111 |
| She Turned a Corner.....     | 112 |
| Recalculating.....           | 113 |
| That Bus.....                | 114 |
| I Asked Her Why.....         | 115 |
| Naked and Shaking.....       | 116 |
| Not Top Billing.....         | 117 |
| She Was Fun.....             | 118 |
| Another World.....           | 119 |
| Another World.....           | 120 |
| A Log Cabin.....             | 122 |
| You've Got My Number.....    | 123 |
| When I Got to the Yukon..... | 125 |
| I Went Back to School.....   | 126 |
| We Fought.....               | 128 |
| How to Get a Wife.....       | 130 |
| The Signs.....               | 131 |
| The Lamp You Bought.....     | 132 |
| To My Surprise.....          | 133 |
| Sunday Morning Thoughts..... | 133 |
| The Worst Fear.....          | 134 |
| Things Not Remembered.....   | 135 |
| The Streetcar.....           | 136 |
| Seeing It Coming.....        | 137 |
| She Left Her Panties.....    | 138 |
| Believe It Or Not.....       | 138 |
| Banana Slug.....             | 139 |
| I Was Free.....              | 140 |

|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Guelph.....                   | 142 |
| Tattoos.....                  | 144 |
| Is It Weird.....              | 144 |
| Life Goes On.....             | 145 |
| Psychic.....                  | 146 |
| Serious.....                  | 146 |
| It Felt Like It.....          | 147 |
| Snow Melting.....             | 148 |
| College Town.....             | 149 |
| November Sunshine.....        | 150 |
| Inspection.....               | 151 |
| Studio Photographer.....      | 152 |
| Hitching.....                 | 153 |
| Get It To The Editor.....     | 154 |
| The Fling.....                | 155 |
| Steel Eyes.....               | 156 |
| He Was Moving.....            | 157 |
| There Are Cracks.....         | 158 |
| Gray Day.....                 | 160 |
| Is That The Real Colour.....  | 161 |
| Old Break.....                | 162 |
| Her Song.....                 | 162 |
| Glasses.....                  | 163 |
| Covid Ears.....               | 163 |
| I Asked You.....              | 165 |
| Couples Grocery Shopping..... | 166 |
| Forever Morning.....          | 167 |
| Shopping.....                 | 168 |
| Don't Mind Me.....            | 169 |
| I Stared at Her Face.....     | 170 |
| Not Your Bed.....             | 171 |
| In Dreams.....                | 172 |
| Better Than.....              | 172 |
| Legacy.....                   | 173 |

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| What She Left.....              | 175 |
| Just Another Shitty Job.....    | 176 |
| The Girls of Winter.....        | 177 |
| She Wanted Nothing.....         | 178 |
| Sick.....                       | 179 |
| The Poor Work.....              | 180 |
| She Had a Lily.....             | 182 |
| Only Silver on Paper.....       | 184 |
| In A Gentle Melancholy.....     | 185 |
| After the Skin.....             | 186 |
| I See Her Again.....            | 187 |
| Coffee and Fresh Air.....       | 188 |
| Back to Work.....               | 188 |
| I Like Black Skin.....          | 189 |
| A Pioneer.....                  | 190 |
| I Could Not Ask.....            | 191 |
| Of All the Sports.....          | 192 |
| Healthy Enough.....             | 193 |
| A Magician.....                 | 194 |
| The Whole Day.....              | 195 |
| Narrow Stairs.....              | 196 |
| The Apartment.....              | 197 |
| I Knew Him.....                 | 198 |
| In Her Eyes.....                | 199 |
| The Bullies.....                | 200 |
| And He Ate.....                 | 201 |
| She Is So Warm.....             | 202 |
| Drinking Too Much.....          | 204 |
| She Hides Behind That Mike..... | 205 |
| The Book of Beavers.....        | 206 |
| A Long Bus Journey.....         | 207 |
| Isla Negra.....                 | 208 |
| I Asked.....                    | 209 |
| I Asked.....                    | 209 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| I Daydream.....                         | 210 |
| On That Hill.....                       | 211 |
| A Long Day.....                         | 212 |
| The Sleep Cycle.....                    | 214 |
| The Covers Were Always a Mess.....      | 215 |
| Mnya.....                               | 216 |
| She Would Sleep Quietly In My Arms..... | 217 |
| I Would Watch Her.....                  | 218 |
| Take Me First.....                      | 219 |
| I Never Moved.....                      | 220 |
| In The Morning.....                     | 221 |
| I Don't Care.....                       | 222 |
| I Know.....                             | 223 |
| I Went for Another Coffee.....          | 224 |
| This Time.....                          | 225 |
| She Loves Company.....                  | 226 |
| Cute Cable TV Show.....                 | 227 |
| One Man.....                            | 228 |
| An Introduction To Haiku.....           | 229 |
| We Fought.....                          | 230 |
| That Was Us.....                        | 232 |
| A Life.....                             | 233 |
| A Bird.....                             | 234 |
| Close Your Eyes.....                    | 236 |
| Good Advice.....                        | 236 |
| I Watched.....                          | 237 |
| My Kind of Find.....                    | 238 |
| The Source of All Dust.....             | 239 |
| Chatting With You.....                  | 240 |
| She's That Girl.....                    | 241 |
| Three Ages of Man.....                  | 243 |
| Joint Custody.....                      | 244 |
| I Make Another Pot.....                 | 245 |
| I Loved Old Joe Smith.....              | 246 |



|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Stolen Childness.....          | 247 |
| She Would Lie Beside Me.....   | 248 |
| It Fell.....                   | 249 |
| Defenses Out.....              | 251 |
| Pomme.....                     | 252 |
| Unconsecrated Ground.....      | 253 |
| Homeless.....                  | 255 |
| Oliphant.....                  | 256 |
| I Drank Too Much.....          | 257 |
| Just Like That.....            | 258 |
| I Looked.....                  | 259 |
| Waste of Time.....             | 259 |
| I've Seen You Around.....      | 260 |
| Pandemic Weather Report.....   | 262 |
| Another Ontario Winter.....    | 263 |
| The Photographer.....          | 264 |
| Campus is Closed.....          | 266 |
| This Sidewalk.....             | 267 |
| Vanilla Latte.....             | 269 |
| Just Enough Time.....          | 270 |
| You Almost Smiled.....         | 271 |
| There is a Room.....           | 272 |
| Cold Pizza for Breakfast.....  | 273 |
| Four Days.....                 | 274 |
| Shout For The Boy.....         | 275 |
| She Walked Eyes Down.....      | 276 |
| I Came In For A Shower.....    | 277 |
| Peanut Butter Story.....       | 278 |
| I Can't Lie.....               | 279 |
| A Regular.....                 | 279 |
| All The Time In The World..... | 280 |
| Am I Home?.....                | 280 |
| The Poet of Nothing.....       | 281 |
| Being Dad.....                 | 282 |

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Right To Leave It Bare.....      | 284 |
| Barbarella in the Labyrinth..... | 285 |
| Not Snowing Hard.....            | 286 |
| Skinny Jeans.....                | 287 |
| The Guelph Balzacs.....          | 288 |

# Some Girls

In my notebooks  
are many girls  
Some tall  
some short  
some angry  
some sad

Some so happy  
they seem insane  
But all of them  
are loved  
after all these years  
All of them  
are loved

~~

# Introduction

With this book I intended to get away from my past. Stupid idea, you can't get away from your past. So here are some poems about old flames and three poem cycles that turned up while I was writing other things. In other words, more poems about Some Girls.

Look, can you think of anything better to write about than the people in your life? Trust me, I'm near the end of mine, and what's important is the people who have been in your life.

The photographs in this book were taken in August of 2005 and feature my favorite fashion model (my daughter Lauren) and Natalie Cushing who also styled the shoot. Makeup by Carol Rich. You can see the published fashion story at:

<https://180degreeimaging.com/180mag/05sept/glorydream/dream.html>

Kim Taylor November 2021



# Will she, Won't She

You would think  
that with no testosterone  
I would have no interest  
in women

While it is true  
that my sexual urge is weak  
my desire for women  
is as strong as ever

It is so much more  
than the old in and out  
The meeting of one mind  
to another is still there

The visual treat  
that is woman  
is still there  
from before testicles and after

The sound of their voices  
some high  
some throaty  
as they laugh

Usually something stupid I said  
It's the attention  
the acknowledgment  
that I exist

Even when my dick functioned  
I was happy with my hand  
It was the shape of a nose  
the curve of a lip

Those haven't changed  
The will she, won't she  
hasn't changed  
Just what she will or won't  
~~

# Lorna

You loved me  
for a long time  
and I barely noticed you  
Just a friend on the team

But in a time of hurt  
and loneliness  
you were there for me  
And as you moved closer  
I became used to you

Eventually I noticed you  
I loved you deeply  
as you loved me  
but old habits die slow  
and I didn't treat you well

I expected you to attend  
to be there when I needed  
and silent when I didn't  
I tested constantly  
Do you love me  
Do you love me now



Somewhere in there  
you wanted more  
just as I gave less  
so you pushed  
and because I knew  
you pushed those buttons  
I became even more angry

Fights are not communication  
they are the opposite  
yet you would take even that  
over the silence I gave you  
and I became even more angry

I destroyed a headboard  
I dented a plaster lath wall  
Until finally, one day while  
I washed dishes  
and you stood behind  
pushing those buttons

Until finally that day  
I spun and grabbed your throat  
Not gripping, my hands screaming  
as they tried to squeeze  
and let go both  
I let go

But I could not stay with you  
You had no idea the turmoil  
in my mind  
No idea what I could do  
and you would stay  
and you would let me  
I had to say goodbye

There was no going past  
no going through that moment  
that day I grabbed you  
No forgiveness for my hands  
on that so-loved neck  
and I had to say goodbye

~~

# Under The Covers

Under the covers  
we come together  
and drift apart  
like ships in mid ocean  
Not to crush hulls  
and drown sailors  
This is a softer power  
to fit together for warmth  
and to drift apart  
to cool down

~~

# Macondo Books

I have been fine  
up to now  
I'm not friendly  
I don't miss crowds  
But just today  
seeing Shakespeare and Co  
in Paris  
I have a deep longing  
to spend seven or eight hours  
in my bookstore  
A bookstore gone  
for several years  
~~

# Scratch

I listen to Radio Paradise  
and Sandy Denny  
Comes the place  
in the song  
where my record skipped  
and it doesn't skip  
It jars me each time  
~~



# November Wind

The wind howls  
the branches scratch  
the screen

And there outside  
The first sleet of the year  
I reach for a jacket

~~

# Your Ghost

I lay on the top bench  
and sweated in the sauna  
But I felt an unease  
so I sat up

Your ghost smiled  
and lay her head on my thigh  
I waited for you to speak  
but you closed your eyes  
and drifted off

I stroked your hair  
and rested my hand  
on your flank  
while I leaned back  
and closed my own eyes

When I opened them again  
this ghost was gone  
but there was an impression  
of your ear on my thigh

I looked again  
and the thigh was smooth  
so I said "good bye"  
to nobody  
and walked back  
to the house

~~

# Strangers

Early morning walk  
adventure walk  
to the coffee shop  
Enough of my own company  
I want to hear strangers talk  
I want to see stranger's faces  
and so I do

~~



# I Don't Remember That

There  
in amongst the wrinkles  
of my thinning face  
is a dimple

~~



# In An Old Letter

The girls next door  
thought me strange  
I wore funny hats  
I had earrings

There were goings on  
in the shower  
and apparently  
I didn't mind which sex  
I played with

The girl who wrote the letter  
who lived next door  
who knew me well  
Laughed and laughed  
~~

# Nostalgie

To fondly look at the past  
seems impossible  
while you are not here

Nostalgie becomes History  
and history repeats itself  
and you are not coming back

I learn from the past  
I learned not to hope  
I learned I must cope  
~~

# I Measure My Life

I measure my nights  
in plodding, shambling visits  
to the bathroom  
Once, I measured them  
in sharp, sleepy orgasms

~~

# No-Man's Land

There is a no-man's land  
between us  
on our not-huge bed

You sleep at the edge  
and I sleep at the other edge

Did that happen  
in the years when babies  
slept between us

~~

# Night Sweats

I bounce between hot sweat  
and icy shivers  
as I bounce between  
bleak despair at the three left  
and grinning glee  
at the three I've stolen

But mostly I plod along  
not missing much  
no bucket list to lament  
during a pandemic  
no amends to make  
no arms to break

Taking a small delight  
in a sugar free key lime pie  
yogurt, eaten slowly  
Cool, as I like my treats  
but not so cold  
that I shiver  
~~

# Johnston Green

It was hot enough girl  
that in the half darkness  
beneath a bush  
on Johnston green  
we simply dropped  
and I rolled onto you  
and you stripped off your clothing  
and I fucked you slowly  
not wanting to break a sweat

As the bars closed  
and the students wandered home  
heading for Gordon Street  
we held still  
only long enough  
for them to tread past  
in that strange hopscotch gait  
of the truly drunk

~~



# A Secret

One nipple went in  
and the other stayed out  
as they usually do

I loved to feel that nipple  
move and expand  
under my tongue

They would both stand proud  
no hint that one of them  
was shy

~~

# A Nipple

Gently taking her nipple  
between thumb and forefinger  
I would slowly, so slowly  
increase the pressure

She would begin to whimper  
after a long time  
but I would not stop  
and she would begin to shudder

~~



# A Bear

For Marian Engel

In Canada  
it is the bear  
lumbering, comical  
so soft, such knowing eyes

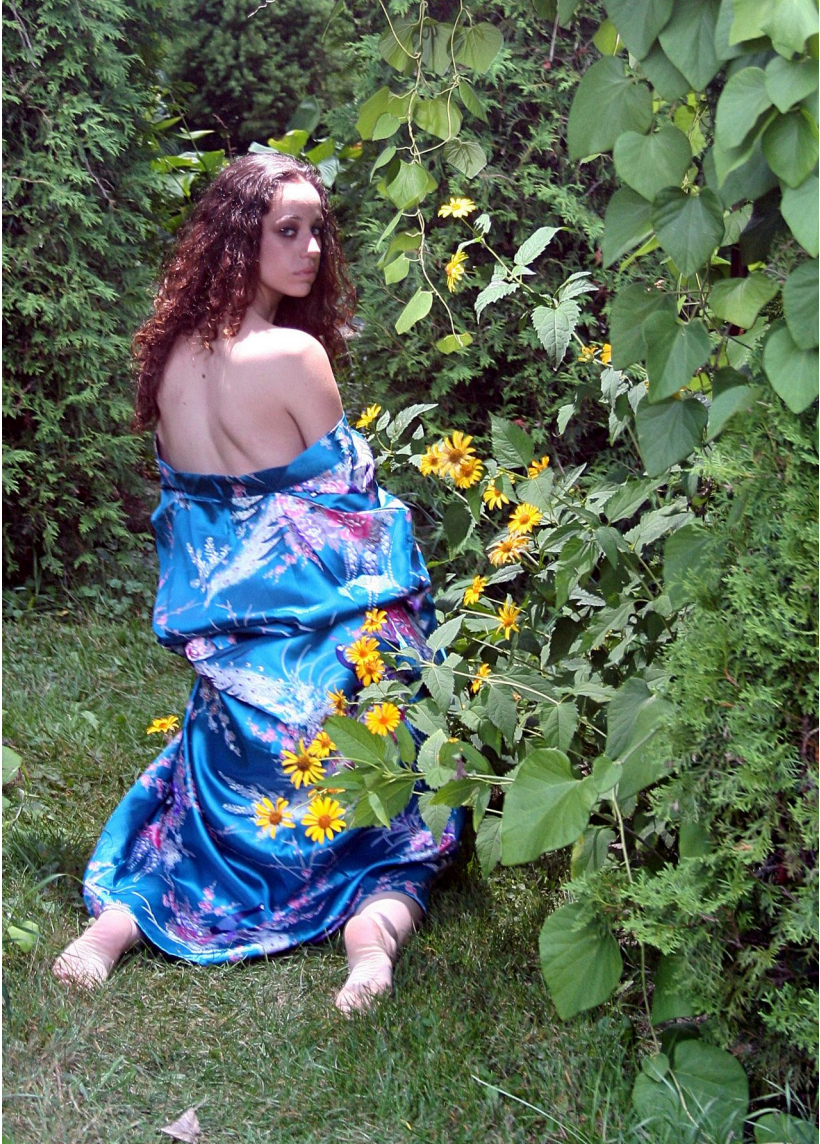
In Canada  
the bear's claws don't retract  
and they can rip a tree apart  
they can rip a man apart

~~

# A Look

She had a look  
that  
thrown over her shoulder  
would buckle my knees

I would ask her to give it to me  
while I had a camera in my hand  
but it never came  
Only when the mood hit her  
~~



# A Story

Another book  
gently urged out  
into the wide world  
and I am sad

Sad as the sperm  
from a good blowjob  
spit into a mason jar  
lidded and slid  
under the bed

"You don't swallow it?"  
~~

# Just One

We walked together  
down an informal path  
and I picked up a switch  
still alive  
still flexible  
and it made a lovely sound  
as it cut through the air

I looked at her and asked  
"Just one" she told me  
She pulled down her pants  
and I leaned her over  
a fallen tree

It was a lovely welt  
and her hand drifted  
to her ass  
for the rest of the day

Not before  
and not since  
Just one

~~

# Fifteen

The clock has twelve  
no fifteen ticks  
no two ever repeat  
no patterns

Just a random sequence  
of fifteen ticks  
And I don't know why  
~~

# Pizzle

A bear has a bone in his pizzle  
as do other breeds  
If I had a baculum  
could I use it  
To be stiff again  
could I use it  
To fuck you  
~~

# You Become Strange

"My mother is gone  
and my grandmother"

That is all the reason you need  
to become that strange old person  
who says outrageous things  
~~

# Eunice

My ass on the tabletop  
my feet on the seat  
I sat above  
and somewhat behind her  
Looking down her shirt  
while she read her book  
on our lunch break  
in the research station fields

Not one day  
but many  
and one late night  
as I lay beside her  
running my hand up her leg  
and over that stomach  
I admitted my deeds

"I know" she said

~~





# Not A Poem

This is not a poem  
Ceci n'est pas un poème

Written in Facebook  
by keyboard  
saved to a cloud

Not a pen  
or a page in sight  
This is not a pipe  
Ceci n'est pas une pipe  
~~

# A Spanking

Slap.... slap  
slap-slap

This went on for a while  
as I spanked her

She said  
"hold my ass"  
and almost instantly  
she shuddered  
~~

# The Old Man With A Broken Neck

My neck is weary  
from holding up my head  
it begins to bend

But you cradle my cheek  
saying  
rest on my shoulder

I am your support  
you are home  
~~

# Dorey

We bought Dorey together  
a plaster buddha  
an incense advertisement  
Because he made us laugh

You left him behind  
when you left  
and I took comfort  
in his serene mission  
to sell incense

He is with me still  
and when I look  
upon his beautiful face  
I think of you

~~

# A Companion

Such a lovely spider  
large, mottled brown  
and standing upright  
in the corner  
where it is dim

I must visit  
say hello to this fellow  
this room mate  
in a lonely apartment

No, no companion  
I am still alone  
Only an empty husk  
dry and draft tumbled  
~~

# The Alaska Ferry

Leaning on the rail  
watching the wake  
stretch out forever behind

I struggled to remember  
if I was moving toward you  
or away

How should I feel  
How should I feel

Slowly, as the sun hit the water  
and sparkled behind my eyes  
I understood I was moving

~~

# Black Box

Is there a black box for humans  
something for those who are left  
to plug into  
to investigate the long events  
that led to this disaster

~~



# Late for Breakfast

She had a friend over  
as I walked in the door  
and that look in her eye

I was suspicious  
she was mercurial

As it turned out she was clear  
“I want a threesome”

It was nice, her friend was nice  
and we investigated nicely  
and eventually came the time  
to sleep

They went to sleep, one to a shoulder  
and I felt quite paternal, quite benign  
but when I woke next morning  
I could not move

both shoulders were dead  
and those girls laughed at me  
as they left for breakfast

~~

# Again Again

Last evening I dreamed  
I thought we had settled it  
I finally wrote your book

Forty years it took  
but it was done  
the story of our love  
sometimes yes  
sometimes not  
but the story was told

And last night  
you came to me  
and said "again"  
"Again"

~~

# A Line

I stand in the deep wood  
quietly  
still  
and I can touch the longing  
the urge toward you

I can stroke it  
this fragile web  
a spider's silk  
wafting through air  
seeking the other point  
a line needs two points

and as I touch that line  
I myself become the other point  
and it tangles around me  
sticking everywhere  
causing me to panic  
as I try to get it off

~~

# The Longer I Look at You

The longer I look at you  
the less sense you make

I look at you for an hour  
and your face shatters  
I don't know what I'm looking at

I look at your body  
for a day  
and the parts blur and flow  
into nonsense

The longer I look at you  
the less sense you make

~~

# I Can't Remember

It is a pain  
an old one

I know it  
because each time  
I see her photograph  
I hurt

But I can't remember  
the pain  
only the memory  
of the pain

It hurt  
We hurt  
and I have forgotten the why  
~~

# What I Remember

I cannot remember  
when she came to me  
I have tried  
but it is not there

But I remember  
her going from me  
Oh yes  
I remember that well

~~

# In The Stairwell

In the stairwell  
to her apartment  
a homeless man slept

I pushed open the door  
shifting his feet  
and started up the stair  
covered in old newspaper  
and uncleaned for months

Hello Mark, I said  
Hello, he said, as he took the five  
from my hand  
and touched his forehead  
in a sort of salute

~~

# The Very Instant

The very instant  
a baby falls asleep  
that very instant  
is the infinite grace  
of the universe

And I knew a girl  
who would lean into me  
head on my shoulder  
and I could tell  
the very instant  
she would fall asleep  
~~



# My Thoughts

A porcupine, flat  
on the side of the road  
and I wanted to stop  
to harvest the quills  
to make a pouch  
for you to keep the poem  
that I would write for you  
when I finished the pouch  
I drove by and my thoughts  
drifted to other things

~~



# Brenda's Car

I never owned  
a car of my own  
I had friends  
with cars  
and later the girls  
who liked me  
had cars

It wasn't a plot  
on my part, I swear  
and I couldn't afford a car  
but I never needed one

I own a car now  
but I'm much more comfortable  
thinking of it as Brenda's car

~~

# I Heard Wrong

I had my tongue  
deep in her pussy  
and she arched  
and she shook  
and she said  
"Fuck, stop stop"

So I did  
She looked at me shocked  
"No, my foot cramped  
get back there"  
~~

# How Much Longer

How much longer  
will I be able to hold you

I don't know  
but until then  
I will hold you as often  
and as fiercely  
as I can

~~

# Not 20 Any More

The alarm clock blared  
scaring me out of sleep  
with a jolt

I converted the jolt  
to a playful shaking  
to cover up my start

But I remembered  
I'm not 20 any more  
and you know me

I told you about it  
and you laughed  
and I laughed

~~

# Pay Attention To Me

I crept into bed  
so as not to wake her  
and I didn't wake her

But I ran my hands  
up and down her body  
and kissed her back

Until she woke  
and saw me there  
Until she said hello

Sometimes I feel invisible  
I apologize for waking you  
but I needed you to see me  
~~

# We Drift

We drift  
in an early morning see-saw  
Sometimes you are awake  
and I'm asleep  
Sometimes I'm awake  
and I watch you sleep

But the best  
is when we both wake  
and I can smile  
into those eyes  
Watch them grow heavy  
and close  
Mine close too

~~



# Got a Job to Do

I know this sounds insane  
my darling girl  
but I must leave our bed  
I have written six poems  
while lying here with you  
and I have forgotten two  
already

~~



# Her Boyfriend is Big

After my mother left  
my father was single  
for the rest of his life  
and I often wondered  
if there were women

One day I drove his car  
and a tyre iron appeared  
from under the seat  
and rolled into my foot  
I asked why it wasn't in the trunk

Well son  
I've been seeing a woman  
in St Thomas  
and her boyfriend is big  
and very jealous

~~

# When She Said Yes

Do you know the feeling  
when you're pushing a car  
wheels spinning  
and it suddenly catches traction  
shooting forward  
and you fall to your hands and knees  
in the slush

That's what it felt like  
when she finally agreed  
to come to my bed  
~~

# Glasses

I look across the room  
taking my glasses off

Then I look at the computer  
glasses on

Decide to read an old letter  
change glasses

That was nice, back to the computer  
Oh shit  
where are the other glasses  
~~

# Lorna Moved In

She was half way  
up the stair  
on the weekend  
she was to tell her folks  
that we were sleeping together

Half way up the stair  
to the new apartment  
and she said  
"You know there's only one bedroom"

And her mother just glanced at her  
and her father said  
"Yes.... and?"

~~

# At The Nudie-Bar

We took the teachers  
to the nudie-bar  
and I drank my beer  
trying to plan tomorrow  
when I looked to the side  
to the sound booth  
and there she was  
the prior act  
putting her clothes back on

She grinned  
and I grinned  
We knew sexy

~~

# Waiting

A small boy  
freshly washed  
new coat  
old suitcase beside him  
He stands  
waiting  
~~

# Sticky

She was always slightly sticky  
her thermostat was a bit high  
so I was careful to lift my arm  
when she rolled over  
to avoid waking her up

~~

# For Her

She liked to sleep  
on my shoulder  
so for her  
I learned to sleep  
on my back

~~



# Hard Week

She's had a hard week  
and I wasn't feeling great  
so I listened to her sleep  
while her back was warm  
all down my chest  
And her ass  
was soft on my thigh

~~

# Lorna Makes Room

I loved holding her  
while I slept  
and I chased her  
across the bed

One night I woke  
to find myself sliding  
Opened my eyes  
and saw her  
with hands and feet  
on the wall  
pushing for all she was worth  
~~

# Coping With A Pandemic

It becomes clear  
why I don't mind a mask  
I remember a girl  
with thick, luscious hair  
and I would sleep  
with my face buried  
into the back of her neck

Those who don't like masks  
have probably never had  
a girl with thick hair  
which is a shame  
because you survive  
and better than that  
you wake up the next morning  
next to her

~~

# You Can Feel a Smile

You can feel a smile  
in the small of her back  
when you say something silly  
as you run your hand  
up from her ass  
toward her neck  
There's no need to look

~~

# Never Met the Folks

I never met her parents  
we were together for years  
but I never went to visit

It's hard to admit to yourself  
that it's serious  
even after years of together

You see, you don't want  
to get attached, if you do  
and she goes away...

~~

# **The May December Cycle**

## That Old Coot

How can she live  
with that old coot  
they would say  
but she was a great poet  
living with a giant

How can she not  
live with him

~~

## A Few Hours

The days are short  
and she likes to sleep in

So I only have  
a couple hours  
to get the jobs done

Before and after that  
I try to do quiet things

~~



## Messy Writing

She has messy writing  
she'd come with a poem  
saying "what do you think"

and I'd think  
Well I can read about  
half of the words  
and I can guess  
another quarter  
And those looked pretty good

So I'd say "fine,  
it looks fine  
Why don't you type  
that one up"  
~~

## Big Salty Tears

My back hurt something awful  
from those years  
picking grass (asparagus)  
and strawberries

But she'd get those young hands  
so deep into my lumbar  
that I'd cry big salty tears  
and say "don't stop darlin'"

~~

## **We Split the Cooking**

We split the cooking  
I was picky  
but hardly ate anything  
and she had a healthy appetite  
and ate everything  
It worked out  
~~

## About the Sex

People asked about the sex  
"Can the old coot get it up"

Can he get it up?  
Hell, once it's up  
it's up for hours

If he can't get it up all that often  
I can't take that much, all that often

~~

## In My Shadow

Is she in my shadow  
they ask  
and I say maybe

Maybe today  
and maybe next year  
I'll be in hers

But you want the truth  
If she wasn't here  
shining forth  
I wouldn't have a shadow  
~~

## Daily Walk

She was a runner  
and I liked to sit  
so we compromised  
and had a walk  
once a day

~~

## He Snored

He snored, he sawed logs  
but he would hang on to my arm  
where it was thrown across his chest  
so I never had the heart  
to poke him into silence

~~

## She Bounced

She was energetic, no doubt about that  
she would bounce around the bed  
wind up the covers  
fart with the effort  
and generally use up more energy  
than she was gaining by sleep

So I would capture her arm  
to keep her still

~~



## What I Give Her

She says she stays  
because of what I give her

Hell I've got nothing  
Never had

I write some  
and if I knew how I did that  
I'd gladly give it to her  
~~

## As Good As Sex

She washes my back  
and trims my nails  
Combs my hair  
and shaves my face  
And that's as good  
as any sex  
any woman ever gave me  
~~

## Once a Week

Once a week  
she gives me a whiskey  
and says to hell with the doctor

And once a week  
I tell her how much I love her  
but I make sure  
it's not the same day

~~

## **I Get Him**

What do I get out of it?  
What the hell do you get  
from the women you pick up  
in bars

What do you get  
from your wife  
with her hand out  
wanting that second car

What I get is him  
~~

## **We Get Along**

He's a poet, one of the best  
and his best year  
was fifteen thousand  
I make nothing

He's got a house  
and I work in a bar  
and we do what we love  
We get along  
~~

## Plenty of Time

She should go back to school  
get away from here  
find a boy  
who isn't dying

But she won't go  
Plenty of time when I'm dead  
she tells me  
~~

## Time to Kick Her Out

She was a student  
then a lover  
later she was a rival  
and now she's a nurse

It might be time  
to kick her out

~~

## He Left

He left  
and that's the end of it  
he left  
and there is a big hole  
in my life  
and in my calendar

It used to be good  
and then it wasn't  
and then it was again  
And then he left

~~



# She Was Older

She was older than I  
and in the morning  
over breakfast juice  
she asked me if you could get pregnant  
from a blow job

And I  
serious biology student  
thought hard for a moment  
Could you have a rip  
in your intestine  
and some survive the stomach...

I shook my head  
laughing at myself  
and said "not a chance"

~~



# I Played a Jock

Thank god I grew up in the country  
where we all had our parts  
I played a jock  
and so drank whiskey and beer

Thank god I ended up in Guelph  
and not a big city  
I was miserable  
I hurt  
but I did not find drugs

Just more beer  
and so my mind survived  
And so I lived  
to be old enough  
to be thankful  
for the roles I played

~~

# Life Model

I turned at the request  
and there she was  
staring at my dick  
leaning forward  
and those nipples  
all on display

I lasted about thirty seconds  
then said I needed a break  
and ran for the change room

When I came back  
that girl  
got to draw my hairy ass  
for the next two hours

~~

# Suzi and Eunice

She was more than cute  
my Mademoiselle Butterfly  
all coquette and accent  
when I met her  
at the seminar dance.

We spent the nights  
and most of the days together  
"Oh" she said "It's so big  
I don't know if it will fit"  
And I kissed her for it

The next year  
I took my wife to the seminar  
and I met my Butterfly again  
No longer new  
thoroughly New York  
with a purse dog

"Hey so good to see you  
this is my wife  
yes, take care, goodbye"

And my wife turned bored eyes  
to me and said  
"You slept with her"

~~

# It's OK

It's OK  
It's fine  
Over and over  
my whole life  
Through ulcers and anxiety attacks  
Through heart attacks  
broken bones and stitches

It's OK  
It's fine  
Forget it  
and I did  
because I knew  
what damage remembering does

~~

# In Trouble Again

Did you turn off the radio  
downstairs  
Yes, said Pam, I put my music on  
Oh, I thought it was CBC

Five minutes later  
she said "that hurt  
that you thought my music was Drive"

Not long after  
The website needs fixing  
And the pan I washed earlier  
has not passed inspection

I try to explain  
that I can't hear well  
but she doesn't want to talk  
about it  
any more  
~~

# As It Turned Out

I told her I was afraid  
that she would knife me  
while I slept

She looked at me  
with a strange expression  
as if it had not occurred to her

It turned out  
that she slept with other men  
to even the score  
and we left it at that  
~~



# Closing Up

The battery box  
is built  
The window coverings  
are up  
the power cord  
is switched to the woodshed  
this morning the water  
is shut down

It is officially winter  
the cabin has been prepared  
and extra propane  
is on the way  
A melancholy morning  
~~

# Good Company

My house lives  
In the city  
and it must make noise  
but I don't hear it

Here in the middle of the bush  
I think someone else  
is walking  
or tapping  
or striking a gong  
The place is never quiet

Good company

~~

# Just Past Dawn

It is just past dawn  
I've had oatmeal  
all my pills  
and a coffee is at my right hand

I am the only one up  
and I have time alone  
with my thoughts  
in the silence

The best time  
of the day  
is slipping away  
with each sip  
but I am content

~~

# No Drama For Stories

My life was not dramatic  
like some  
No heroin addicted heroines  
shared my bed  
to give me stories  
for my poems

Just the girl with cuts on cuts  
until her arms were ropy scars  
the girl gang raped  
on an exchange trip to Quebec  
Burned all over with cigarettes

The boys too, my normal friends  
the ones addicted to bar fights  
the boy who was a bouncer  
his wife left him  
so he loved throwing out the bikers  
The fellows who drank  
until they puked  
wiped their mouths  
and drank again

This was not romantic  
Not worth a poem  
But I don't mind  
I had enough drama in my life  
More sickness and death  
wasn't needed

~~

# Your Sorry Ass

Your sorry ass  
is in the doghouse again  
No idea why  
but the shoulders are cold  
certainly not soft

Ride it out  
you can't defend  
what you don't know  
Maybe it's not you  
Maybe if you wait it out  
~~

# She Wanted to Fly

Richard Thompson sings  
Beeswing  
and I'm crying again

She was wild  
a free spirit  
and I wanted to tie her down  
while she wanted to fly  
~~

# Say It Plain

Say it plain she said  
be clear she said  
you drive me nuts  
with your equivocation  
(she used words like that)

Her bags were packed  
and she looked at me, waiting  
I don't want you to go I said  
And she left

~~



# Weed Whip

Like a golf club  
with a wavy edge  
It even had a grip  
of some sort of rubber

I used that whip  
all one summer  
fighting back the wild grass  
as the edge of her lawn

My hands were blistered  
callus ripped  
and my knuckles bled  
But it wasn't enough

~~

# Illiterate

The day I first fucked her  
she was angry  
tugging on my beard  
all frowns and complaints  
and "why don't you like me"

And I was just angry enough  
to take her cherry  
later I wondered why  
Neither of us  
could read those signs

~~

# She Read Me

She read me  
like an old book  
worn out and faded

Each page read  
ripped out  
and thrown on the fire

~~



# A Reason

Did I ever see my mother  
kiss my father  
They must have kissed  
My father said they met  
when he was on a boat  
she on the dock  
he smoking a cigarette  
her legs bare  
and coal met skin

They married  
and had two kids  
so they must have kissed  
but I don't remember  
when I was five  
he hit her  
and she left him

And many years later  
when my temper got loose  
and I had to leave a girl

My mother said quietly  
"It wasn't all on him  
you didn't just leave  
in those days  
you had to have a reason"  
~~

# I Learned a Thing

An old girlfriend  
who cried about a teacher  
and I thought he was mean  
had given her a bad mark

And another girl  
gone from school  
pregnant by this teacher  
and I learned a thing

I learned a thing  
I never wanted to learn  
But I taught self defence  
for many, many years

~~

# Something-phile

I know a boy or two  
who think they are Japanese  
they can't speak the language  
but they pause inappropriately  
waggle their fingers  
say um and er  
Just like a Japanese  
who can't speak English well  
~~

# Not Today

I am on a plain, a pampas  
and I'm running, fast

a Gaucho girl  
lovely horse  
curly hair (not the horse)  
under a wide hat  
baggy pants  
and the bolo she swings  
throws

and I'm on my face  
in the stubble (not my face)  
as she runs up  
kicks me in the side  
and says "not today boy  
Not today"

~~

# Testosterone

It's a bit sad  
that a dream  
about a hard-on  
is a dream  
about death

~~

# Once Again

On the very edge of the cliff  
she stands  
and opens her arms to me

I can't take it  
she is too close  
I smell wet wool, horse  
leather and her shampoo

I run to her  
as she steps aside

~~



# Her Long Long Hair

Her long, long hair  
wrapped around my balls  
she would pull it tight  
saying I like you  
but not in that way

A woman's hair  
will tighten  
and never let loose  
Hers was around my balls  
and she was pulling it

~~

# She Turned a Corner

She slammed the door  
and stormed off down the street  
Lovely word that, stormed

As she walked away I thought  
do I go beg her to stay  
is that me losing

Or do I just watch her go  
because I'm right  
is that me winning

And as I thought  
this way and that  
she turned a corner  
~~

# Recalculating

Sometimes a turn in the road  
would lead to somewhere  
that didn't lead back to where

I used to like going down that road  
but today it's hard  
to find someplace that Google  
can't send their map

Where "I can't get there from here"  
becomes that bing  
that means "recalculating"

~~

# That Bus

She said  
I'm tired of walking  
and she flagged down a bus  
See you in Lethbridge

I watched her wave  
as the bus pulled away  
and I waved back  
I wonder if she's still on that bus  
~~

# I Asked Her Why

I asked her why  
she was with me  
She was so much more  
than a broken down man  
with no plan

She would move from butterflies  
to rocks  
in the blink of an eye  
She read and read and read  
and she could do so much better  
so I asked her why

She caught my cheeks  
and kissed me gently  
and looked into my eyes  
the taste of her tongue lingered  
and she said  
"how the fuck should I know"

~~

# Naked and Shaking

I will not promise this is true  
I have not believed it  
for many years  
and I didn't believe it when it happened

But there she was  
angry, beautiful, radiant  
Naked and shaking  
She looked at me

And all the things of the kitchen  
began flying toward my head  
I ducked around the corner  
and listened to them hit the floor

When I looked  
she seemed her normal self  
Not a bit of unkindness  
And I didn't believe in "looking daggers"

~~

# Not Top Billing

She was the lead  
and I was the supporting character  
that points at her  
Did I even have a name?

~~



# She Was Fun

-for Eunice

She was fun  
There's no other way to put it  
Just fun  
and I loved her  
with every cell in my body  
but I was crap at saying so

I was moody  
no idea where I was going  
She had a plan  
she was going to learn to fly  
and after a couple of years  
she left to learn to fly

Should I have gone with her  
Perhaps, but I'm sure  
I would have screwed that up  
too much ego  
to follow a girl

Too stupid  
And so I stayed  
and watched her go  
watched the fun go out of my life  
~~



# Another World

# Another World

What if the many worlds idea is right  
that the world splits  
and splits  
and splits

For one thing it would prove  
my 8 year old self correct  
Decisions make splits  
and maybe the world  
goes off in another direction

Old idea now  
but I'm old  
It was new then

It may not be real  
but deep in my mind  
it feels like it is

Decisions I have made  
have hung around  
for a lifetime  
With the feeling that maybe  
I'm down the wrong track

No, not that, but  
perhaps there was another track  
I should have taken  
Another decision  
I should have made

~~

## A Log Cabin

I got off the ferry in Ketchikan  
and spent the rest of the trip  
with her and the kids

We went to New Mexico  
and I built her a log cabin  
just as I said I would

There we lived  
until the kids grew up  
until they moved away

And she said "It's hot here"  
And I said "you miss Alaska"  
And so we sold the cabin  
~~

# You've Got My Number

I had told her  
that if she ever needed me  
I would be there

Ten years after I last saw her  
she called  
She was in Dartmouth  
and she was in trouble

The man she married was kind  
at first  
but she had been beaten  
and she was ashamed  
Would I come

I was there in two days  
and when I knocked I was invited in  
and sat for a chat  
As I watched him being civil  
I could see him watching me  
and suddenly he hit her hard  
on the mouth  
then he looked at me

I broke his arm then knocked him out  
I called an ambulance  
then dragged him to the stairs  
and rolled him over

She left with me  
and spent a month  
while he healed  
Then she went back to him  
"I have too much invested" she said  
"And I'm sure he will be nice  
now that he knows I can call you"

He may not let you call next time  
I pleaded, but she was sure  
Sure he loved her  
Sure she loved him  
Sure I would come next time

~~

## When I Got to the Yukon

When we got to the Yukon  
I decided to stop  
Stopped moving  
Stopped hitching

I found a job in Whitehorse  
looking after the tourists  
tending bar  
and living with new friends  
in an old house

Later I worked for the government  
and bought a cabin outside of town  
where I stayed alone  
for several years  
until one day  
she walked in from the bush

Nothing special  
but it was mid-winter  
and she didn't knock  
just walked in  
said hello and started to cook

That night she shared my bed  
and told me she wasn't sure  
how long she would stay  
She's still here  
sitting by the fire  
all these years later

~~

# I Went Back to School

Five years in Animal Science  
and I'd had enough of being a tech  
I went back to school  
for my PhD

I tried to stay in Guelph  
but I had to take a post doc  
in BC  
The thing is, my wife didn't come  
said she would follow  
but never did

We were having trouble  
like every couple  
and I guess she'd had enough  
so I carried on alone  
Finished the post doc

Got another in Ireland  
and kept moving  
country to country  
The women were friendly  
but none of them stuck



Finally, after almost 20 years  
I got a position back in Guelph  
and after 20 years  
my wife showed up at my door  
She said "took you long enough"

So here I am  
back where I started  
Poorer, twenty years older  
but feeling once again  
that I'm home

~~

## **We Fought**

We fought  
Oh god, we ripped each other's guts out  
cats in the alleyway were never as bad  
but somehow we stayed together

And we fought  
She was jealous  
I felt suffocated  
but somehow we stayed

We fought over money  
eventually over kids  
Eventually we had thirty years  
of fighting

But the last ten  
she fought against her body  
ten years the kids and I  
watched her fight her tissues

And eventually the wrong thing  
stuck to the wrong thing  
and she was gone  
We both lost that fight

That was ten years ago  
the kids have grown  
and left home  
and here am I

I never found anyone else  
There was no one else  
who could reach inside my chest  
and rip out my heart

~~

# How to Get a Wife

You never know, my son  
what or when it's going to stick

So you just keep throwing  
the spaghetti against the wall

~~



# The Signs

The soft rustle of cloth  
then the clank of his belt  
hitting the floor  
She wakes up and thinks  
good, he's come here  
instead of to his girlfriend  
and she smiles while pretending  
to be asleep as he slips under the covers  
So he can wake her with his hands

The soft rustle of cloth  
then the clank of his belt  
hitting the floor  
She wakes, looks at the clock  
and thinks good  
he's come home  
instead of to his girlfriend  
and she wonders at him  
so damned consistent  
so hard to change  
And she didn't catch the signs

~~

# The Lamp You Bought

- for Eunice

We talked for a long time  
on the telephone  
while I looked around  
at our apartment  
Seeing our books  
and our furniture  
and the lamp you bought  
at a second hand shop

We talked comfortably  
as always  
and you told me your week  
and I told you mine  
the same as always  
and for half an hour  
I was content, happy  
and as you said goodbye  
you asked if I was sending  
your things on to your new place  
~~

# To My Surprise

I wrote you a poem today  
and to my surprise  
I found it full of fond memories  
and none of the pain  
that used to be there

~~

# Sunday Morning Thoughts

Shall I say  
"Oh, I am dying  
stage four  
and I wish to make amends  
may I see you again"  
Shall I say that  
after forty years

And what if I do  
and she says  
"Who is it again,  
who is calling?"

~~

# The Worst Fear

The worst fear  
I think, that I have  
as I come near  
the end  
is that  
you will not think kindly  
of me  
~~



# Things Not Remembered

When I think of the laps  
that I ran  
and swam  
throughout my life

When I think  
of all the books I read  
the pages turned  
picked up and put onto shelves

I wonder  
that I can't remember  
the fifteenth circuit of the school  
top hall  
bottom hall  
stairs at either end  
on the tenth of December  
1973

Or the 103rd page  
of Vonnegut's  
Cat's Cradle  
the one where  
something happened  
And I read about it  
on some date  
~~

# The Streetcar

The streetcar goes black  
slows  
then catches light again  
speeding on its way

This was our story

~~

# Seeing It Coming

For Janice

I opened the knife drawer  
and one had been jammed  
It leapt into the air  
and turned a lazy loop  
as I watched

I could see where it was going  
but somehow I never moved  
just watched  
as it turned another loop  
tip down  
and slammed into my foot

~~

# She Left Her Panties

She left her panties  
jammed between mattress  
and wall

An emotional landmine  
waiting for the matrimonial truck  
to reach that part of the road

~~

# Believe It Or Not

Believe it or not  
there were girlfriends  
who didn't want  
to cut my hair

Even after I explained  
that it was terribly intimate  
that it would bring us closer  
they would say "I'm not your mom"

~~

# Banana Slug

Walking down a railway  
in Southern BC  
I looked and saw  
a yellow banana slug  
and was shocked

Nothing that large  
with no spine  
no external support  
has any business  
being on a rail  
Anywhere  
~~

# I Was Free

I wanted to be free  
to go with the flow  
as all my generation wanted  
No plans  
no worries the universe will provide

Thirty something years  
in the same house  
with the same woman  
two kids  
twenty four years working  
in the same place

Exactly what I wanted  
the flow followed  
gave me everything I wanted  
and I was free  
The universe provided  
what I needed

~~



# Guelph

Take the secret places  
of my childhood  
scrape them bare  
and build condominiums  
it matters not to me  
They were places of pain  
the ones that were not boltholes

But the old houses  
with their elegant  
if decaying facades  
even the salt boxes  
built after the war  
with 70 years of tinkering  
70 years to make them, themselves  
Leave these

So much money  
flooding into this old city  
And the land too valuable  
for those old houses  
Knocked into the basement  
and developer-built monsters  
built to the very edge  
of what you can build



All the same four plans  
for every developer drooling  
and lapping up the cash  
the same four plans  
like good little rich folk  
who can afford but never want  
the living houses  
of dignified old age

The trophy wives  
want the symbol of wealth  
their fellow trophies know  
are the signs of success  
The boys who commute  
can't tell you the colour  
of the pillars out front  
They just want food and a bed  
~~

# Tattoos

I must be too old  
for tattoos

I don't remember one  
on the lower back  
of any girl I knew

~~

# Is It Weird

"Is it weird" she said  
"that the first time  
I saw an erect penis  
I thought  
'I think I'd like that  
in my mouth'"

~~

# Life Goes On

The city has its first white frost  
and the winter coats  
mitts and hats  
are on

The pair who just came in  
are bundled  
looking quite like each other  
jeans, green puffy coats  
grey balaclavas

I'm looking forward to watching  
as they drink their coffees

~~

# Psychic

I will spend the next two days  
probing a chip on my tooth  
with my tongue  
where I bit a piece of gravel  
in my oatmeal  
this morning

~~

# Serious

How can you walk by  
with a winter coat  
and spongebob pajama pants  
with a face that serious

~~

# It Felt Like It

The sun did not stop  
in its course  
The Moon did not fall  
from the sky

The birds flew  
as they always did  
and people walked by  
as they always did

But that day  
You walked out of the door  
for the last time

~~

# Snow Melting

The snow melting from the trees  
and the eaves of the houses  
does not sound like rain

I struggle  
Ah  
No sound of water hitting the street  
~~

# College Town

Leggings and leather pants  
while the frost is on the roofs  
I love a college town

~~



# November Sunshine

Mid November sunshine  
and a cafe to sit in  
a body that walks  
a mind to think with  
eyes to see

All these are gifts  
so easily taken away  
so seldom appreciated

~~



# Inspection

As the cars come under the train bridge  
heading up Gordon Street  
toward the University  
the early morning sun  
lights up the interior  
and each car that passes  
is inspected

I guess their stories  
I admire their sunglasses  
and I smile at those  
who are singing  
~~

# Studio Photographer

Long, long ago  
I switched from talking folks  
into my bed  
and instead talked them  
into my studio  
where I could look  
and look  
at how the light bent  
around their bodies

The best part of sex  
was always the morning sun  
falling across the curves  
of a sleeping girl  
The photo studio  
saved a lot of hangovers  
if it didn't save much money  
~~

# Hitching

Itchy feet  
at my age?  
A twitchy thumb  
I want to stick it out  
and head west  
or east, who cares  
North

Come with me  
But my job  
but I have a gig  
but your pills  
and your appointments

Am I one of those cats  
who wander away  
to die alone  
in the woods

~~

# Get It To The Editor

Get it down  
get it done  
let the editor worry  
about cleaning it up

So I do  
I get it down  
I get it done  
and then I remember  
there's no editor  
~~

# The Fling

Oh dear, oh dear  
what sort of an ego  
must I have had  
to figure I meant  
more than I meant

Forty years plus  
and I have just finally realized  
I was the fling before the thing

~~

# Steel Eyes

-for Penny

I am spent  
completely spent  
I came across a song  
from so long ago

Shawn Phillips "Steel Eyes"  
and she was there  
with me all day  
and I have done nothing

Nothing, with the great feeling  
that something has yet  
to be done  
But there is nothing to be done

Her life is done  
My life is done  
But that song goes on and on  
deep in my head  
and I'm spent

~~

# He Was Moving

The wind blew the rain almost flat, and it came in waves as the man walked along the side of the road. Curiously, he had a jacket thrown over his shoulder, even though it was mid-November.

It was as if he didn't get wet, didn't feel the cold.

He was walking from no-place that you could see, and was heading to the same destination. Completely unsmiling, but not frowning either, He was moving, that's about the best you could say of him.

He was moving.

~~

# There Are Cracks

Ghosts

I am haunted by ghosts  
from my past  
I tried my damndest to lose them  
all of them  
but there are cracks  
and they slip in

Sometimes by a song  
that may as well be a brick  
thrown through the windows of my soul  
Sometimes a stray remark  
on the street  
or a glance up at the window  
of an old apartment

They come  
for unpredictable times  
often only a moment  
and I can smile



But sometimes they stay  
and being ghosts  
they can do nothing  
but screw up my day  
Using a grappling hook  
to dredge memory after memory  
from the muck deep in my mind

Like grappling hooks do  
The memories are ripped  
shredded barely enough to know  
what it is  
So I need to guess

Where does this one go  
is it before or after that one  
Why is it so dark, was it me  
And I begin to go dark  
until she leaves me alone again

~~

# Gray Day

Hello mid-November gray day  
So nice to be here  
I promise I won't complain  
because each day is a gift

Grey, sunny, snow, rain  
It's all a day I see  
another notch in my belt  
The only notches I count  
~~

# Is That The Real Colour

This girl in front of me  
(with her back turned, damnit)  
has such lovely chestnut hair  
I want to ask

~~



# Old Break

Long blond hair  
and longer legs  
in tight jeans

Walking across the road  
and down the street  
I watch  
until my neck hurts  
~~

# Her Song

Did they all have a song?  
Play me Steel Eyes by Shawn Phillips  
or Beeswing by Richard Thompson  
and she is there, in my head

Are there other songs out there  
waiting to kick me in the gut  
(crotch more like)  
with all the emotions that were  
~~

# Glasses

She turns her head to the side  
and I see those powerful glasses

I always liked girls  
who needed glasses like that

When they took them off  
I must have looked better

~~

# Covid Ears

Winter hat on  
mask comes off  
and his ears are folded  
sticking out  
from under that hat

~~



# I Asked You

I asked you to marry me  
I asked you to leave me alone  
I asked you to come back to me  
~~

# Couples Grocery Shopping

9 o'clock on a Thursday in the Metro  
and the couples are drifting  
through the produce  
and into the aisles

So impossibly young  
so proud to be shopping together  
He, following behind her  
as she examines the purchases

Take care of his health  
young woman  
He won't do it himself  
it's up to you

I hope they all make it  
although it's unlikely  
Still, the effort  
is always worth it  
~~



# Forever Morning

We spent the morning  
drifting in and out of sleep  
and I held her close  
falling in and out of love

Each time I woke  
I caught my breath  
at the sight of her

I wanted that morning  
to last forever  
And it did  
~~

# Shopping

No, not that  
and don't pick that up either  
don't wander off  
Go find some soap  
no, not that kind

Since I was eight  
in every grocery store  
that I entered with a woman  
And they wonder  
why I don't like shopping  
~~

# Don't Mind Me

"Don't mind me"  
I said  
as I flopped on her bed  
"I've just come to keep you company"

"Do you want some covers"  
she said as she patted my limp dick  
"No thanks" I said

Later I rolled over  
and wiggled my rear end  
but she just kept reading

"I'm going to go now  
because I'm not getting a back rub"

"You're welcome to stay if you want"  
~~

# I Stared at Her Face

I stared at her face  
for much too long  
and she smiled  
she knew I was trying  
to figure out who she was

It's not that I didn't know  
somewhere  
but her face was different  
It was often different  
and I felt the need to look closely  
to memorize it once more

~~

# Not Your Bed

No, she said  
I'm not going to your bed  
Oh, I said  
OK I'll go to bed alone

No, she said  
You want to sleep with me  
sleep in my bed  
And she lifted the sheets  
and moved over

~~

# In Dreams

Let me come to you in dreams  
and hold tight  
let me shiver with you in winter  
and sweat in the summer  
and hold you in your dreams

I promise not to let go  
and whatever fights come  
in your dreams  
I will stand with you  
~~

# Better Than

To feel a girl  
lay her head on your shoulder  
and feel her eyelashes  
tickle your chest  
~~

# Legacy

She showed up  
in a snowstorm  
and asked for shelter  
She had left  
She had better things to do  
and I had moved on  
I looked at Annie  
and she nodded  
So I let her in

She was wounded  
that's for sure  
but she was always wounded  
for as long as I knew her  
she was half crippled  
with half imagined slights  
but this was different  
She said nothing

In a bout of nasty thoughts  
I imagined she would be happy  
for those wounds of old  
the ones I said "be careful  
it could be worse"  
but not even then  
could I think "told you so"

Annie was kind  
I was kind as memory allowed  
and I kept silent  
while those two talked  
far into the nights  
When I asked, Annie shook her head  
and I stopped asking

One day she left  
Waved a small good bye  
and was gone  
It was warm, new things growing  
and I never mentioned her again  
Annie never volunteered  
and we moved on with our lives  
~~



# What She Left

She spooked me  
quite often  
In certain moods  
I would swear those grey eyes  
would stir and swirl  
like smoke from the leaf fires  
of my youth

She was never unkind  
and yet behind those eyes  
I sometimes saw ice  
and bare mountain rock  
allowing no piton  
giving only a long slide  
to a broken body

I guess I never understood  
what went on underneath  
Nothing at all she said  
Nothing she let on, certainly  
And so one day  
when she quietly left  
I had nothing to feel

~~

# Just Another Shitty Job

The miracle, the wonder  
of flight  
The marvel of man  
high above the clouds  
Meets a woman tired  
of the endless shit  
of entitled passengers  
And "close the blinds" she says  
"people want to sleep" she says

"That heavenly view  
only serves to keep you awake  
and that only results  
in you wanting me to serve  
So listen when I tell you  
there is no more service  
there are no more sights  
of the tops of the clouds  
The shades go down  
and so should you  
into whatever sleep you wish  
so long as it doesn't involve me"

~~

# The Girls of Winter

The girls of winter  
are not so cruel

Under their hats  
their scarves  
their mitts

they leave us the leggings  
to give a hint  
of the glories that exist  
under the layers of winter

~~

# She Wanted Nothing

She wanted nothing of marriage  
and I was confused  
She loved me deeply  
of that I am certain  
She spent almost every night  
in my bed  
and left in the morning  
with sleepy thanks and goodbyes  
and sleepy see you tonights

One day it made sense  
She came late  
after all the crap of her day  
She found me half asleep  
and I rolled into her  
as she sighed

She left early  
before I could come awake  
and start with the crap  
of being a couple  
The arguments over breakfast  
were not for her  
So a fond adieu  
and off to deal with the world  
Leaving me to deal  
with my own crap  
in my own world

~~

# Sick

She coughs again  
and my throat hurts

My heart aches  
that I cannot take this from her  
That I can do nothing but wait

~~

# The Poor Work

I think hard  
back over 60 years  
I'm pretty sure I didn't work  
up to five.  
But after that  
I was in school  
or I was learning  
often both

Summer vacations  
were not free time  
There was no place to go  
except where a book  
could take me  
And those summers  
when there was a job  
I worked

When I left home  
for University  
there was an uninterrupted line  
of school, work or both  
up to today

Oho you say, my children  
but you don't have a job  
and you would be right  
except for the things I make  
in the shop  
and the classes I teach

But you are correct  
I have slowed down  
Almost to a stop  
with a broken neck  
and fresh cancer  
but I am spinning up again  
if only to write

My point?  
I suppose my point  
is that I cannot understand  
not working  
not going to school  
Life is too short  
to believe the lies  
about taking it easy

My point is  
I can't get it through my head  
that you won't starve to death  
if you aren't working

~~

# She Had a Lily

She had a lily on her right shoulder  
and slept on her left  
with me behind her  
if I was lucky

I recall that lily like my right hand  
so clear it is  
but I can't recall her face  
she was like that

All my memories of her are shot  
riddled with holes  
her name  
what she did, hell what she was

Some things I know I knew  
but she would look at me  
in that strange way  
and then I didn't know

But I know that lily  
and the feel of her side  
and the inside of her  
And I watch for that lily

~~





# Only Silver on Paper

I'm a photographer  
and I took the shot  
developed and printed  
So I know it's only silver  
on paper

Yet as I looked  
I traced the lines of her face  
with my finger  
And in my gut  
I could feel her skin  
~~

# In A Gentle Melancholy

We live our days  
my old cat and I  
in a gentle melancholy  
of bygone days

Once we were young  
once we had stories  
once we lived for now  
and now we remember then

We live our days  
in gentle melancholy  
and the days that we had  
were for someone else

~~

# After the Skin

Mornings were the best  
no more physical mysteries  
all that had been explored

What was left was a lazy comfort  
as my hand wandered  
"Not my bladder" she said  
as she moved my hand  
up to her boob  
and hugged my arm

~~

# I See Her Again

There she is again  
Not as tall as she was  
forty years ago  
Same gamin haircut  
lips more thin  
Same eyebrows  
ass not as full  
Same waist

I know it's not her  
I know because I can see  
my own face in the mirror

But it's nice to see her  
working on an essay  
bright eyed  
with a great sweater  
Not exactly my sweater  
but cable-knit

~~

# Coffee and Fresh Air

You smell like coffee  
and fresh air she said  
with more of a smile  
than when she said  
you smell like beer  
and cigarettes

And very much more nicely  
than when she said  
You smell like her  
you son of a bitch  
~~

# Back to Work

I have to hang up now  
I'm going back to work  
I'm taking off my pants

I was a bit concerned  
until I heard the kids  
in the pool  
~~

# I Like Black Skin

How do you shoot black skin  
I was asked  
and I had no idea

Black, white, red, whatever  
it's skin  
take a light reading  
and shoot it

As for big pores  
Don't get me started  
because I start to suspect  
you are not interested  
in black skin

~~

# A Pioneer

I would stagger  
half way across town  
on a cold and snowy night

Just to be stranded  
at her place  
for the storm

~~





# I Could Not Ask

She was breathtaking  
She commanded any room  
she walked into  
The men I mean

Within five minutes  
every man in the room  
was in love with her  
if she did not speak

Three minutes  
once they heard that voice

And (here I brag)  
she lived with me  
sometimes slept with me  
demanded nothing of me  
although I'd have given it  
gladly

I was of course  
in love with her  
But she demanded nothing  
and so I could not ask  
anything

~~

# Of All the Sports

Of all the sports I played  
(there were a lot)  
the best was to run

There, I let down no one  
but myself should I lose  
and relied only on myself  
to win

I ran alone every day  
around a track  
along a path  
or through school halls

Alone with my thoughts  
absent thought usually  
mindless, pacing, breathing

~~

# Healthy Enough

Healthy enough  
that the walk  
to the coffee shop  
is nothing

As it once was nothing  
and then a struggle

I arrive in good time  
neither sweat or panting  
to claim a covid table

to drink coffee  
Think, write, gaze  
To see humans again  
in all their nattering  
splattering mattering  
~~

# A Magician

For my masters project  
I grew anaerobes  
collected their DNA  
cloned that into E. coli  
and selected for cellulase  
Characterized that cellulase  
Have I just recited a spell?

That was five years  
forty years ago  
before the world became stupid  
before it became socialized  
by media  
by not-idiots for profit  
from neo-idiots

Another twenty years  
I worked with amazing machines  
amazing ideas  
amazing scientists  
while I watched the world  
become stupid  
While I became, not a scientist  
but a magician

~~

# The Whole Day

You know, she said  
I love you deeply  
and cuddling with you  
is wonderful

But dude, you've got papers  
and I've got reports to write  
We can't spend the whole day  
canoodling in bed

Just a few minutes more  
I said  
and the morning was gone  
The afternoon too

~~

# Narrow Stairs

Narrow stairs  
up to a small landing  
One was me  
the other Rene

"Please go ahead  
I'm on the left"  
And that sway  
from side to side...

~~

# The Apartment

The apartment  
was the landlord's girlfriend  
and she had visitors

When I pulled up the carpet  
in the bathroom  
it came away in handfuls

How many years  
of drunken guys  
missing that toilet?

~~

# I Knew Him

Hey, you know that plant  
that deadly nightshade right?

I nodded, yes I know it

Do you think you could show it to me

I looked at him  
I knew him  
knew what his family did to him

No, I said  
not wanting to help him

I don't know what happened to him  
I never asked

~~



# In Her Eyes

Every time you speak to her  
you choose your words

Do you choose kind  
or do you choose hurt

What is it you like to see  
in her eyes

~~

# The Bullies

He was so little  
but he was over the line  
He had taken so much  
and he snapped

The other boys laughed  
not much he could do  
but I looked into those eyes  
and thought, best we kill him now

One day he will be grown  
one day he will have power  
and those who stand before him then  
will stand in for us, before him now

~~

# And He Ate

Pumpkin yowled and yowled  
for the chicken in the fridge  
leftovers for another meal

Such a racket  
and my mother said "here  
have it all you little pig"

And he ate until it was gone

~~

# She Is So Warm

She is so warm  
and it's cold and wet outside  
It's so nice to drift here  
beside her  
But she has to work  
and I have to go home  
Come on, be the hero  
Get out of bed

~~



# Drinking Too Much

Ah baby, you're drinking too much  
you're drinking during lunch  
and you ain't eating no more

I don't know what to do  
is it something I did  
or is it something else

Ah baby, you're sinking fast  
you're going under the waves  
and I got no place to grab your hand

Tell me what to do  
or tell me to go  
I don't want to watch you drown  
~~

# She Hides Behind That Mike

She hides behind that mic  
both hands holding  
as if it's going to get away

She sings out her pain  
and makes us cry  
and she hides behind that mic  
so we don't see her tears

~~

# The Book of Beavers

You try to dam the river  
and the river goes around

You build your houses  
where it is shallow  
and the river respects that

Do not fight the river  
Divert it, slow it, but if you stop it  
the river will rise up  
and wipe away the world  
you must live in the river

-The Book of Beavers

~~



# A Long Bus Journey

A long bus journey  
the soldier slept on my shoulder  
for several hours  
and got off at the last stop

She sat down beside me  
with hardly a nod  
and kept her own council  
for many miles

Then, just as I was nodding off  
myself  
head bouncing against the window  
she turned to me

She held out her hand  
and with a solemn face  
gave me a sheet of paper  
and got off the bus

Half asleep I looked at it  
expecting a shill for Jesus  
but what I read  
brought me upright and wide awake  
~~

# Isla Negra

I walked through  
the house of a poet

Looked at his things  
admired them

Looked at the ocean  
The black rock he loved

I looked at his bed  
where he slept beside women  
where he slept and died  
where he sleeps no more

And I turned to you  
Looked closely at your face  
and saw there, more poetry  
than I would ever write

~~

# I Asked

I asked  
and she said yes  
It really was  
as simple as that  
I asked  
She said yes  
~~

# I Asked

I asked  
and she said no  
and that was that  
as simple as that  
I asked  
She said no  
~~

# I Daydream

I daydream  
of what I will cook  
for the family supper

I wake to glance  
at the time  
so I know when  
to start the coffee

And I wake again  
to cook the supper  
I daydreamed about  
~~

# On That Hill

On that hill  
so very far away  
we sat hunched  
under the stars  
Far from the city  
its lights just another star

We talked  
on that hill  
of a life together  
of children  
of our house  
with pets  
and chickens

A garden for her  
A shed for me  
and a lifetime together

We had that life together  
all the days of our lives  
during that night  
on that hill  
so far away

~~

# A Long Day

A long day  
in a very hot town  
and at the end of it  
a cool shower  
before you show me  
the wonders you have found  
and I share your bright eyes  
your excitement  
at each and every treasure

~~



# The Sleep Cycle



## The Covers Were Always a Mess

She would be asleep  
when I came home  
from the night shift  
That small smile on her face

The covers were always a mess  
and I would straighten them  
She would wake a little  
and move over  
releasing my pillow  
from where she hugged it

I would get into bed slowly  
everything hurt  
and she would lift the covers  
over me  
then turn on her side  
and wiggle toward me  
until her ass was in my crotch

She would take my arm  
and put my hand on her breast  
and I would kiss her shoulder  
bury my nose in her hair  
and sleep

~~

# Mnya

Sometimes she would move away  
because she got hot  
and I would stroke her back  
Just to hear her say  
"Mnya"

~~

# She Would Sleep Quietly In My Arms

The city moved on  
outside our window  
sirens  
the beeps of backing trucks

The crossing bells  
of the train gates  
and she would sleep quietly  
in my arms  
as if she was safe from harm  
as long as I held her

I kept a kitchen knife  
jammed above the bedroom door

~~

# I Would Watch Her

I would watch her  
in the light from the street  
that filtered through the sheet  
we put over the window

I would watch her  
and listen to that quiet buzz  
not quite a snore  
as she slept

I wondered what she dreamed  
and hoped that it was nice  
Sometimes she frowned  
and I would frown too

But mostly she smiled  
and I would close my eyes  
to drift back to sleep  
to my own dreams of her  
~~

## Take Me First

She would sleep on my shoulder  
her breath tickling my chest  
and I would listen carefully  
for any sign of the catch  
that might mean she had caught  
that damned plague

I prayed to whatever gods listened  
to take me first  
because I couldn't think of living  
without her  
I prayed while my tears  
ran slowly down my cheek  
to wet her hair

~~

## **I Never Moved**

It seemed like I never moved  
when she was in my arms  
I was afraid to make her wake

When she shifted  
I would lift my arm  
and the sheets  
to make it easier for her

~~

## In The Morning

In the morning her alarm rang  
and she would have to get up  
I would pretend to sleep  
to make it easier for her

Through half closed eyes  
I would watch her dress  
which was somehow better  
than the rarely seen undressing

She would come to the bed  
and gently kiss me  
on the forehead  
and whisper "sleep, angel"

~~

# I Don't Care

"I don't care"  
was a repeated phrase  
during my early years

By early years  
I mean until I was fifty  
I suppose

"I don't care"  
was an answer to a question  
I couldn't answer  
a hurt friend  
I couldn't help  
A cruel injury  
from a loved one

It took a lot of years  
before I could let go  
that pitiful defense  
and admit the hurt  
~~



# I Know

I know it is over  
I know that once more  
my moods  
my temper  
have driven her away

But I try  
desperate  
I tell her I love her  
I tell her I need her  
I tell her I will change

And she says simply  
I know

~~

# I Went for Another Coffee

I went for coffee  
and came back to my table  
There was a girl in my seat  
so I said "excuse me"  
and started to move my things  
to another table

"Kim" she said quietly  
and I looked  
She was there  
two years, and she was there  
It was as if she had never left  
I was shaking as I sat down

~~

# This Time

She was packing to leave  
her backpack was open on the bed

So many times before  
and she always came back

But this time  
She was packing her books

~~



# She Loves Company

She complains  
it's what she does  
It relieves stress  
it deflects anxiety

Misery loves company  
the more miserable  
the more she complains  
so that you too  
are miserable  
~~

# Cute Cable TV Show

There is a cable TV show  
somewhere in Europe  
where the hostess travels

And each place she visits  
in her cute little car  
she finds a cute little boy  
to show her the sights

to buy her dinner  
(paid for by the producers)  
and to spend the night  
in her bed

~~

# One Man

She lay down beside  
one man  
and woke beside  
another

Apparently  
one got up to pee  
and the other returned  
to her bed

Because they are  
interchangeable (men)  
It took her all morning  
to figure it out

~~

# An Introduction To Haiku

(Doubleday \$2.95)

(A-a)

Little beads of dew  
the passing of spring  
Oh this rain of May

We have no proper words  
Summer heat  
To the eye - my dearest one's fan

Simple descriptions of actual scenes  
a good illustration  
The new moon

The Boy's Festival  
the new and the old  
A young lady of the court

The new and the old  
the place where I was born  
Basho learned the art

A dewdrop fades away  
at the lake bottom  
Meaning could be put into words

~~

# We Fought

We fought and fought and fought  
I would drop my hands  
from the steering wheel  
which was man for  
"kill me now"

Somehow we stayed together  
for far too long  
Past chances for love  
Past the time  
we should have called it quits  
~~





# That Was Us

Wanting so much  
to be the wing of a gull  
and you the other  
in perfect coordination

Wanting so much  
to be one ball  
and you the other  
of the steel testicles swinging  
on the back of an Alberta truck

And all we ever were  
was a dry sharpie  
and a sidewalk chalk  
in the back of a drawer  
in a summer cottage

~~

# A Life

My life meant as much  
as a game of solitaire  
played on a smart phone  
while taking a dump

~~

# A Bird

I do not understand  
this bird  
who flies in one window  
and out the other  
Light in the room  
dark outside

Is it that we don't know  
what's in the dark?  
Is the in window the mama bird?  
and the out window the worms  
getting revenge on the dead bird  
who ate so many worms?

Is the out window heaven?  
then what's the in window?  
The previous life  
of the reincarnationists?

Is the bird the universe  
coming in through a white hole  
and out a black hole  
or bursting and freezing?

Are we never to know  
what's out there  
in the dark  
If the dark never comes in  
Are we supposed to find out?  
To guess?  
To create a religion?  
If we can never know  
does it matter at all?

~~

# Close Your Eyes

You can not-see it  
you can un-see it  
this terrible thing  
she did to you  
this un-forgivable thing  
she has done to you

Unless of course  
you have told her  
that you've seen it  
~~

# Good Advice

Good crisp  
this advice on poetry  
I read and read and read  
without intending to read  
is impenetrable

I don't understand a word  
but I begin to doubt  
that a poem is a poem  
is a piece of dry TURB  
~~

# I Watched

When she washed her hair  
I watched  
When she trimmed her nails  
and when she put cream on her feet  
I watched  
and she always smiled  
when she saw me looking

~~



# My Kind of Find

A thrift store purchase  
a notebook  
with a couple of pages gone  
and a quote  
"Have courage and be kind"  
-Cinderella 2015

~~



# The Source of All Dust

I have found  
the source of all dust

It's under my bed  
It's time to switch socks  
from fancy to fuzzy  
and so I pulled out the box  
and it was covered  
with tell tale dust

I have found the source  
Discussions are ongoing  
as to what to do  
with our new information

~~

# Chatting With You

Chatting with you  
in a coffee shop  
a rare thing  
perhaps to be rare again

It is a challenge  
to keep the smile on your face  
and the frown away  
I am doing my best  
~~

# She's That Girl

She told me  
she was lonely this morning  
No cuddles

I want to be her cat  
to jump into bed each morning  
and cuddle

You would too  
if you knew her  
She's that girl  
~~



# Three Ages of Man

She went to bed late  
and I got up early  
In between  
we had our life together

Outside that life  
she had her space  
late in the evening  
I had my morning things  
my writing  
my quiet thinking

Neither of us asked  
and neither offered  
we had our time together  
and that was enough  
All we needed  
~~

# Joint Custody

She spent part of the week with me  
and would go home to her family  
Those Sunday afternoons  
were melancholy times

Often she would take two trips  
to load her car  
so I would wait at the door  
and when she came for the second load  
I would pretend  
she was just arriving  
~~

# I Make Another Pot

I make another pot  
of ethical beans  
and open an energy bar  
because the snow  
just got colder

The one who loves winter  
has gone out the door  
and the cold draft  
has gone straight  
to my bones

~~

# I Loved Old Joe Smith

I loved old Joe Smith  
all us small boys did  
he let us hang around  
his smithy  
and pump his bellows

And next door was the ice house  
where the ice cut from the lake  
was stored under sawdust  
until it was walked upstairs  
to the iceboxes of the village  
by a man  
with leather over his shoulder

Gone, all gone  
this tedious hand-work  
and it's so much better now  
isn't it  
isn't it?  
~~



# Stolen Childness

When our children are born  
they take with us more  
than DNA

They take our own kids  
the ones we got  
from our parents

and leave us with  
what our parents had  
after we stole  
their own childhood  
~~

# She Would Lie Beside Me

She would lie beside me  
for a while  
to keep me warm  
to comfort me  
My arm around her

But small shifts  
restless breaths  
would tell me soon  
she would be gone  
to do the busy things  
she did

and I would be left  
with a cold place  
where she was

~~

# It Fell

It fell  
the last plate  
of my mother's set  
It spun in the air  
forever it seemed  
and as it drifted down  
toward the floor  
her hands drifted up  
to her mouth  
where she struggled  
not to scream

Her eyes growing wide  
and wild as she watched  
the last plate  
of my mother's set  
tumble through the air  
to finally smash  
on the kitchen floor

She turned her eyes to me  
hands in fists  
at her mouth  
quivering in horror  
she couldn't speak  
and I smiled  
and I opened my arms  
and I said  
"it's only a plate"  
~~

# Defenses Out

She had her defenses out  
knees and elbows  
aimed dangerously at me  
as I got under the covers  
shivering from the cold

I moved over to touch her elbow  
with an arm  
a knee with a leg  
and said "I'm stealing your warm"  
"Is it working?" she said

~~

# Pomme

I look at that tree  
and see all the places  
that bear only the stem  
of an apple that was

I look to the branch  
that I can reach  
more stems  
and there  
at the very end of that branch  
a single apple  
ripe, rosy, sweet  
~~

# Unconsecrated Ground

My great-grandmother  
once told me a story  
about her own grandmother  
who lived in a small village  
when a visiting priest  
cast his eye upon her  
and took her to his bed  
against her will

Just then we were distracted  
by our arrival  
at the Red Barn drive-through  
and we ordered hamburgers

I was furious for a year  
thinking about that priest  
and my so many hyphenated relative

One summery evening  
Great-gran recalled the story  
and saw my anger  
Oh, she said  
I never finished  
I stopped sputtering and listened

She knifed the priest  
and the village men buried him  
out behind the church  
just beyond the graveyard

~~



# Homeless

When did it happen  
at what age  
did I become homeless

I thought of going home  
and thought  
"which home"

There are several  
some still standing  
some gone to dust

None are home  
any longer  
Home is who lived there

How can I go home  
when, at some age  
My house became my home  
~~

# Oliphant

We stop  
on that gravel road  
we are walking  
and stare  
At what we could call  
a large puddle  
Two hundred yards  
from the lake

No inlet  
no outlet  
Two hundred yards  
from the lake  
We stop  
and watch small fish  
swim in the water  
warmed by the sun  
~~

# I Drank Too Much

I drank too much  
for too many years  
and she worried

A huge belly  
and a fat liver  
and she worried

Then came the day  
when no pills became a dozen  
and I quit drinking

~~

# Just Like That

She said "it ended just like that"  
and I thought  
I would have given anything  
for it to have ended suddenly  
finally

without years of trying  
years of thinking maybe  
it would work  
Years of wondering why  
~~

# I Looked

I looked  
I went on the net and I looked  
for books similar to the books  
that meant a lot to me

I looked  
and I found the books  
I had already read  
I don't know what that means  
~~

# Waste of Time

She told me she was a witch  
and she was going to spell me  
into love with her  
I told her she was wasting her time  
~~

# I've Seen You Around

She was stunning  
the best I'd seen  
in a very long time  
and she was walking  
toward my table

I watched as she sat down  
and she said "I've seen you around"  
I'm not sure she had  
I'd certainly have noticed her  
but she asked to buy me a drink

I hadn't ever refused a drink  
I couldn't, I was a poor student  
so I said yes  
To several drinks

She asked me about myself  
talked about me  
the whole evening  
and offered nothing of herself  
I didn't think about it

At closing time  
she asked where I lived  
and said her place was closer  
She didn't ask  
she just assumed I would go with her  
I didn't think about it

It was nice  
more than nice  
she had the skills to go with her looks  
and she seemed to know  
all of my tricks  
We were up half the rest of the night  
and fell to exhausted sleep  
about six in the morning

At nine I woke up  
and she was gone  
She left a note that said only "Thanks"  
and I realized I didn't know her name

I didn't snoop, just dressed  
and went to school  
Later that day I could hear  
the faint scritch of a notch  
being put in a bedpost

Still, I looked for her  
whenever I was in that bar  
but never saw her again  
~~

# Pandemic Weather Report

I am as close  
as I can get  
to the University  
across the street  
in a coffee shop

Just another dirty old man  
sitting in the window  
watching the girls walk by  
Happy they are as tough as ever

With their leggings  
and bare ankles  
in flats  
at minus seven degrees

~~



# Another Ontario Winter

Oh yes, the beauty of the first snowfall  
High humidity  
and minus seven combine  
to put ice on the windshield  
with the consistency of diamond  
without any of a diamond's sparkle

Little plastic scrapers  
are no use at all  
wipers that seem to be part  
of the glass need to be carefully peeled off  
and as you stretch  
to scrape the middle  
you realize the ground is black ice  
and you have stretched too far

But oh yes  
Get the camera out  
and take a photo of the clean snow  
before it gets grimy  
before it gets chopped and melted  
and frozen again  
into a no-man's land  
of ankle twisting horror

~~

# The Photographer

How many women  
did I meet in this Second Cup  
just across from the University

How many interviews  
"Do you intend to be a Sunday school teacher?  
A politician?  
How would your mother feel  
to see nudes of you on the internet?"

"I actually have no use for these shots  
they may end up in a magazine I publish  
on the internet  
But mostly I shoot nudes, to see light  
as it bends around your skin"

"No I have nobody to sell them to  
and no plans  
Yes, if you're good, I may pay you a little  
for the second shoot and others  
but it's minimum wage I think  
and you get all the shots  
to do with what you want"

"Why? Because you should do your nudes  
while you are amazing  
so you can show your grandkids  
and shock the hell out of them  
If your selfies look like the photos  
I've shown you, no need of me"

That was a good ten or fifteen years  
and I really should  
go through those shots  
and do a couple of books  
but my delight was in shooting  
in watching the light bend  
around skin

~~

# Campus is Closed

I spent most of my life  
in those buildings  
Student and employee  
and now they are denied to me  
No business there

Mostly I don't mind  
I don't exist there  
any more  
and I was paid well enough  
with benefits that keep me alive

And I spent most of my life  
amongst sweet young things  
bright eyed boys  
and cute as a button girls  
who kept me ageless

~~

# This Sidewalk

This sidewalk I'm looking at  
at the top of Gordon Street hill  
How many times did I walk past  
Stumble past  
Stagger past  
Run past here

How much trouble  
did I get into  
as I walked by here  
or was walked by here  
with another girl

The boys drove home  
and back up this hill  
during the great blizzard  
so they could be stuck  
in the bar with money

I tugged on Brenda's coat  
not a block from here  
half way up the hill  
"pull me up, can't make it"

I can see the bush  
on Johnston Green  
where I screwed a blond  
while a brunette waited  
at home

I can see the building  
where the coffee shop lived  
in the basement  
Where, on nine cups a day  
I put my heart into fibrillation  
and almost got the paddles

Half the old trees are gone  
scrawny new ones planted  
and the intersection rebuilt  
a couple of times  
but it will always be  
Gordon and College  
The real entrance to the University  
So much of my life

~~

# Vanilla Latte

She waits outside  
for her friend to return  
with a vanilla latte

Oval face  
brown hair pulled back  
A few spots on the face  
left over from high school

and my brain says  
"I bet I've got a shot"  
while my body says  
"are you fucking nuts  
you have no testosterone  
You can't get it up"  
and the brain says  
"So what, I bet I've got a shot"

~~

# Just Enough Time

I see they are still using War Mem Hall  
for classes  
and I see the early leavers  
shooting out the doors

The ones that never get  
the last few notes  
as they put on their winter coats  
and head for the exits  
while the prof is trying to remember  
what he forgot to say

Nine am and it's a walk  
to the Starbucks  
to get into line  
for that coffee  
before the next class  
Yeah, I was there  
~~



# You Almost Smiled

Sweet little blond  
long curly hair  
cute mitts  
Looks into the window

Be careful dear  
you almost smiled  
at the creepy old man  
who smiled at you

~~

# There is a Room

There is a room  
a bed and not much else  
In the bed is a man  
and a woman

He is facing the woman  
eyes open  
watching

Her eyes are open too  
but her back is turned  
and her hand grasps the blanket  
~~

# Cold Pizza for Breakfast

Cold pizza for breakfast  
scrounged from a box  
An aspirin  
washed down with flat beer  
Check the bed once more  
to make sure

Then grit the teeth  
get on the bus  
and wait until that first coffee  
so hot it burns your mouth  
~~

# Four Days

I've been driving, riding  
for four days straight  
to get to you

And baby I've never met you  
but I know you are there  
waiting for me

Driving, riding four days straight  
running to you  
running to your arms

Can you feel me coming  
can you feel me getting closer  
Even if I've never met you

Four days straight  
into your arms  
Four days straight into you

And when I meet you  
I'm going to tumble into your arms  
tumble into you

~~

# Shout For The Boy

I'm drunk again  
I don't know why  
Hell I don't need a reason  
but I can't find my home

I know you're there  
in the room beside mine  
and I know you're sleeping  
and I can't find my home

All these houses look alike  
I can't try all the doors  
but I think that I might  
cause I can't find my home

Won't you look out your window  
shout for the boy  
the boy who's drunk again  
and help him find his home

I'm drunk again  
and there's nobody with me  
as I try to find my home  
try to find you tonight

I'm drunk again  
I'm alone again  
I can't find my home  
I can't find my way to you  
~~

# She Walked Eyes Down

She walked eyes down  
for so long  
I would cup her chin  
and lift her face  
and she would give me  
a sad smile  
then drop those eyes

Years later  
I saw her on the street  
turning tricks  
looking straight into the eyes  
of a john  
like she was trying  
to burn a hole in his head  
~~

# I Came In For A Shower

I came in for a shower  
and noticed a light  
under her door

I knew she was gone  
I knew it was a grow-light  
for her herbs

But somehow I drifted over  
and into her room  
The heart has its own hopes  
~~

# Peanut Butter Story

I open the peanut butter jar  
and see a wild chop  
like the sea in a storm  
and I think of you  
and how you stab and stab  
with your knife

So unlike the way  
you smooth it on the bread

~~



# I Can't Lie

I seem curiously resistant  
to fiction  
yet nothing I write  
is entirely fact

It is a problem  
I have yet to write my novel  
Or, for that matter  
knit my sweater  
~~

# A Regular

Made it once more  
in the local coffee shop  
"Kimberley wasn't it"?

It's always a moment  
when you become a regular  
when you're greeted by name  
~~

# All The Time In The World

Lovely lovely  
blond wavy hair  
reading a library book  
small fingers turning  
the page  
totally engrossed

All the time in the world

~~

# Am I Home?

Someone has built  
a snowman family  
on the wall  
of the patio

They are happy looking  
with their stick arms spread  
looking at my old apartment  
across the road

~~

# The Poet of Nothing

I really am the poet of nothing  
small observations  
for a small life

No great events to comment on  
No great political battles  
No personal tragedy

Isn't it great?

~~

# Being Dad

A friend in Argentina  
will have a child soon  
While they were discussing it  
it happened  
and I am so pleased

We are never prepared for a child  
We are never prepared  
for that burst of love  
that instant explosion  
when we see our child for the first time

Tomorrow is Lauren's birthday  
she is twenty eight I think  
I'm her dad, I'm probably wrong  
but  
The instant I saw her, newborn  
I knew I would step in front of a bus  
to save her

Being a scientist I know about chemicals  
"Oh it's oxytocin that makes you feel that"  
I don't care  
I don't want to hear about that  
I know that both my children  
Yes Liam, you too  
are the most important things in my life  
So much more important than my life

If it's chemicals, bring them on  
but surely after a quarter century  
the chemicals are washed out  
Surely after a quarter century  
of fights and frustrations  
It's not habit any more  
This feeling, it's being Dad

So happy birthday Lauren  
Happy birthday Liam  
and happy birthday Seba  
you're going to love it

~~

# Right To Leave It Bare

Now THAT is an impressive waist  
She is right to leave it bare  
even as the snow falls  
and to wear yogapants  
just to show it

I'm sure that once  
I had a waist like that  
but somewhere over the years  
I seem to have lost it  
If I still had it  
I'd leave it bare too

~~

# Barbarella in the Labyrinth

It was a new country, lots of snow, and cold, so cold. Big puffy jackets, deep hoods and scarves, hands in mitts in pockets. Huge boots.

The people were curiously thin, even with those puffy jackets, but perhaps that was just their diet. Perhaps their poverty.

He didn't think about it too much until he stopped for a bit in a coffee shop. Nobody took off their coats, kept their mitts on as the coffee drifted up and into those hoods.

It wasn't cold in the shop, but nobody except him was coatless, hoodless. Curious, he turned to look at the person behind, to look into the hood, to look at the inside of the back of the hood.

~~

# Not Snowing Hard

It's not snowing hard  
but it's got that look of  
"I'm going to snow for a week"

The roads are slush  
because the salt is working  
and we've got the good old  
Southern Ontario slush  
over water

And my summer tires  
are still on the car  
Such are the joys  
of living in the freeze-thaw zone

~~



# Skinny Jeans

Skinny jeans  
nice legs  
all bundled up  
Ah, turning the corner  
Oh, it's a guy  
Still, nice legs  
~~



# The Guelph Balzacs

The poster for the Guelph Balzacs  
features the Basillica  
and that Gryphon statue  
plus someone  
writing on a card

At the bottom of Gordon Street  
The church on one side  
The University up the hill  
I guess it's OK  
in a relevant to the location  
sort of way  
~~

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