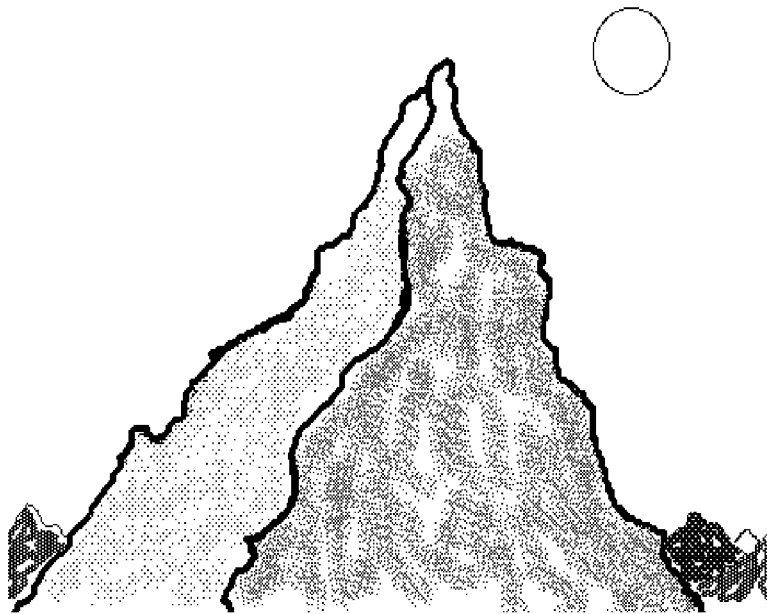


DUDE MANTRA



Doug Baker

DUDE MANTRA

“Art is not the product,
but rather the process”

Mantra n. *Hinduism*. A sacred formula believed to embody the divinity invoked and to possess magical power, used in prayer and incantation

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For beloved nights
and rainy days
which keep
reminding me of the love
for the woman
who saved my life

DUDE-MAN

forever
to make light of me
I will
explode in your face
and deliver you
to your end

forever
taunting and then disgrace
those fuckers around
who chafe lightly
and take your
only.....

I am the dude-man
how mountains are formed
a wild man all the more
I've hiked to the tops
of the craggies in the mind
and picked my ass

naked

and stumbled down
the other side
my hair growing
ZEN and all that
forever

THE ALL-NIGHT CHURCH OF FISH

frantic chapel out on the finger of a bay
where crabs and microcosmic shrimp scurry among feet
dressed in fishing garb and hanging out in your attic
with nothing to sit upon but books and our haunches
the evening turned to morning and the sky opened wide

that was our last evening together (for now at least)
and the conversation eventually turned to religion and
meaning

Did this universe just happen to explode
and we end up as shrapnel passing through this attic?
or did the hidden hero of miracles (GoD to some)
gingerly send the world of worlds spinning through the
dark?

Conclusions we met upon like stuffy professors
yet it seems that either is unbelievably far-fetched
for how could porpoise or striper rise from mud and ash
but what about GoD?

he is such a disinterested fellow
How can He be?
maybe he's shy (or maybe not there)

then the all-night church of fish came to an end (the sun
had winked at us)
and we and you brother climbed down the ladder
shutting the attic door and leaving behind the books
to return to sleep for a few universal milliseconds
when we would wake to sunshine and a fishing boat
lures, potato chips, and beer as we hoped for nibbles and
flounder

that was when I had a thought in my big enamored head
for maybe there is not GoD or some explosion

but just a moment before our eyes
like big fish upon our lines

PREVAIL

standing at the cash register
of a Turkey Hill at 5 am
hungover and buying what
will probably turn out to be
my last coffee

then standing
where the rocks are like razor
already trickle of sweat
dripping off of nose and elbow
though it was only six in the morning
and we were in the shade of cool
rocks and strong trees

doubt was hanging off
my chest like big tits pulled by gravity
and Ken gets me into this Swiss harness
which is just a couple wraps of rope
around your testicles and you
can't even breathe easy 'cause of
that even though you haven't started
climbing up or down

so there we were
in these rope diapers and we
scale the first ledge and get to
the major precipice and I silently
think, "Yelp, I'm gonna die, but I
promised Ken I'd do this."
(all the while we're joking about death
and even worse we're laughing)
and I'm expecting William Shattner to appear
any moment with helicopter and video

after talking knots, and agreeing
on a clove-hitch followed by a bowline
I am to go first and think suddenly
that it all looks easy (like I can walk
on water suddenly) and ease my weight
of 145 pounds over the edge and try to
test the rope, but I just fall with a
rope stretching twang and the rope holds me
as my knees get chewed by the rock

the rock climber above me is laughing
and reminding me that we are using
boating rope and I'm dangling 300 feet
above more rock at the bottom, saying
to myself, "My life held by boat line?"
so I push with my feet and repel a
little into the air and clear the ledge,
not breaking my nuts

we make it to the bottom, but
would have made it there under our
power or at the whipping hand of gravity
and stand there like we just skipped
down K2....then realize the trouble
we're in for when it takes Ken an hour
to climb back up 10 feet and me even more
(swinging scared relying on a
boat line) and close my eyes at one point
thinking, "God, this is it!"

then I am even more jaw-dropped when
spotting one portion of the rope has
been plain burned and one of the three
main cords is useless! I yell this to

Ken and he and I both decide not to rely
on the boat rope unless it is the only
thing separating us from our dark end

but we got to the top
and a new and wild exhilaration
filled my body as Ken and I walked out
of the woods and back to our cars
and drove off after I thanked
Ken for dragging my ass out of my
self-induced safety so that we may
scramble on sharp rocks like
lizards coming out for the sun
in the morning

DIRT CHRIST

smiling so much
chock full of goof
take a second to lose control
sharing in a case
a criminal water

it hurts
but is merely a heart
could easily be seen
beside the goat nads
browning in the meat section
of an overcrowded SUPERmarket
nearing 8 pm in the rain
wrapped in styrofoam
and saran

standing in line
so conscious and sweating
thoughts rush through my head
using the divider
to avoid mixing up the groceries
and finally handing over
a twenty for dehydrated
noodles

then I look up
and into the next aisle
there stands Christ
haggard and crusty
from the lonely streets
buying some miracle whip
he smiles broadly
and now I know

AXLE OF THE UNIVERSE

it dwindles there
beyond out of sight
barely keeping all this moving
the outline is faint
and some call it astrology
but its just a rusty axle
in need of grease
and is breaking
beautifully down

at times
in real dreams
and reality dreams
I wish to climb the ladder
that must exist somewhere
with a ratchet in my paw
and slink up to the axle
with my tongue sticking out
sending bolt by bolt
soaring towards mars

until it comes down
and we go for a glorious
destruction-armageddon
spin through a splintered
black arena with no walls
deciding this is more fun
than waiting for the world
to die

OF GHOSTS AND TREES AND ROCKS

stood we
before leaving
with heavy packs upon tired hipsters

how the moon wouldn't let us alone
or go on its way decided without care
but no we stood there anchored on rock
as god shone down his only flashlight
on our yet-young faces
as we turned and ducked
the shadows over path

recalling that we were
slinging packs once again
after years apart and
finally convinced by pot that we're all ghosts
reunited only because we love
each other is a brother
of sacred contribution
and worth the weight

still getting used
to the drug abuse
and the roller coaster of out thoughts
I've never met anyone who could
take it as far as either of you
so that by 4am we were
naked once again and
wailing all around like lost dancers
on good weed and jim beam

thanks be to our fire
enabling our butts and ass

to sit there as night spun on
above cold rock and kept talking
so we never once noticed
the moon as god's flashlight
going down once again

timeless
clowns are good for each other
they take notice that the trees have
souls and die big woody deaths
and are more powerful than
rock upon which we sit
and they'll break it to bits
before the next
moons up

in the foggy Shenandoah morning
we awoke all cross-eyed and merry
and climbing the ragged mountain
finally seeing
that we're the moving parts
inside the Appalachian hip-talk
and out tears are justified
if only to moisten the ground

all these years
are beloved past
nurturing the peace of yourself
like a star floating in love
hanging out with the moon
near the mountain top
with a fire
and friends

PAINT OVER WALLPAPER

and if we are
just ships passing in the night
then send a cannon ball my way
across the urban scene
a bang to the head
and suck me out with a jolt
from my murkier me
so that off we may go
to a bar or some joint
in order to put this universe
down in some equation
divisible by two
and will fit on a napkin
easily

every couple of decades
the poets fill with the hot air
of anger and forced society
and slowly rise over their
country full and bloated balloons
puckering wisdoms and blowing truth
to point out and make people see

paint over wallpaper
and begin with your own designs
floriferous patchwork of little control
your head a white gourd
spraying the primitive mist
upon the walls and paper
leaving you with nothing
but what you believe

THE KINGSFORD MAN

throws it all in his car
and fishing poles like a lance out the window
hears nothing but music, wind, and rattling pots
sees nothing but bend of road and sun through leaves
He meets his friends there in the woods
and they speak of everything
and nothing ever to appear in history books
of yesterday and today
grabbing firewood and expressing concern
over the current state of glowing coals
within their campfire
the warming heart of night

the kingsford man does his duty
as cheerily as on the side of a bag of charcoal
tossing and turning bacon, eggs, hot dogs, burgers,
elk, potatoes, onions, and peppers and never forgets
those seasonings necessary for total completion
of the dish and heaps it all upon paper plate
and lays it down smiling for those around him
with rumbling bellies

the kingsford man enjoys a good drunk
and with assistance can kill nearly
one hundred beers and stumble over logs
as he walks to the edge of camp and
fumble with his zipper trying to get it out
so that he may return and consume more
yet the kingsford man never loses touch entirely
and grows instantly thoughtful quiet
when he hears a great horned owl moving tree to
tree above hoo hoo hooing over all the
misdirected human activity below

the kingsford man goes to bed around five am
and tries to get into his bag with grace
but rather falls on his ass several times and drags
all kinds of FOOLiage and twigs in with him which
will scratch his naked ass into the sunny morning
when he gets up and feels no hangover due to the

cool sylvan air and joins the other kingsford men
coming forward from ground and tent
to brew some coffee and start it all once again
before the weekend and charcoal is gone

SEPTEMBER DESOLATE

and the trains still rise
while there at the towns square
are futile efforts of teenage cool
and I lean over still haunched
thinking of all of my friends ever
and where they are
and what drove us apart

it can rain forever
and still the clue seems to elude
suddenly our candles flicker stupid
and are nothing more than smelly fire
that illuminates
brown dusty tapestries
that were once clean
and smelled of pumpkin seeds

there
in a naked circle we were
that is to say we were
with and without nothing and had
reached the truth
like gravity upon our appendages
and heard October coming
as we're about to fall

PISSING AT THE WORLD

feeling more like cheese
than some elegant HUMAN up on two feet
my consistency is more of large curd
than anything like rippling muscles
and as the milk goes sour
the bladder is poisoned
and full

but before we can get to the brim
we kind of have to realize
that it's getting pretty bad around here
and we can SMILE nice as much as we want
yet the shadows still push at the trees
and they dance behind our faces
our plastered grins, our cages, our here and now
kind of makes you want to lift up the lid
and fall in forever

though we are merely small
and tiny compared to the hawk's view
how full to bursting lay or bladders
of ego and swishing attitudes of late
that we may mount upon the highest object
and smile at the all-knowing night
squatting or aiming in our mission
for a moment
petty gods of rain

but this all dries up
in the sun of knowing that we CANNOT
make ends meet of who is wrong
or ever right and must be content
with just bumping into each other

with a smile even though once in a while
we'd rather let our zippers fall in traffic
on a sunny day and squat or aim
in our mission for the world

SINGED

all the fucking
stupid fleshy butts
that I have humped
and heaved and wished I were
somewhere else and
humped and heaved
all the more
for that reason

HEART OF PALMYRA

In my fervent
and constant searching
I have tripped and stumbled
over the things
at the end
and have realized
the night is
full of it

TRUCK DOWNHILL

got a poem in the mail from Jim today
which he had hard-shifted into a new young poem
and it seems to me he has done and crafted
one millions words just this year alone
and is unstoppable and great
making his movements upon his mountain road
of thought just like a truck downhill
jerking and thrusting, screeching tires
with tubes and radiators
all a-sprouting proverbs and new freedom poems
which shall never end
until he has rolled into his valley
and grinds gears into hydraulic park
and steps out into swirling dust
with that grinning dakota smile

DUDES MUST CAMP

couldn't wait
to get out of the city
and into the woody brothers
where our fears were left behind
miles ago in the road and
they sweat and heave
trying to keep up with us
taking a few last running strides
before quitting

camping through or
through dealing with urban camp
so here we are in mad rush
pulling ropes and hoisting tent
as cool rains played with our hopes

we were almost all there
lacking only KURT
as he traveled far from Pittsburgh
towards us only to drink beers
around no fire and in boot mud

first night saw us
victorious under Deanna suggested
huge tarp and we wanted to hug her then
but KURT was still not here so we walked
down dark road and met the Fish and Game Commission
and they looked for trout in our pockets
but found none and they went to our camp
whilst JIM and GRAEME and I sat in the Jeep
smoking nervously and talking to thwart the vibe

on the hill WES was fooled by flashlights into thinking

it was us and said all joking, "LOOKS LIKE WE'RE
BUSTED."

"YOU MAY BE", came the voice from the Commission

they had no right
(look at it this way: those sons of guns wore tie glistening
tacks - that was the only way we knew who they were
while we wore dirt under our finger nails and it was clear
that we were natural and part of the woods)

they only harmlessly sifted
through the camp and opened coolers
saying smug under breath, "Humph...
what kind of beers you drinking...."
like we would have been busted for
Milwaukee's BEAST!

WES: "Keystone." (His hair had to be standing straight
up.)

All went by harmlessly
and they left (six truck loads
of the Commission which I had wanted
to join - at one time)
and we returned from the creek
to the camp and set in like upon
a carcass of activity and never returned or
noticed us blowing by our sanity

Next morning was bright and we tried fishing
but became VERY tired of seeing trout
dangle from the lines of other guys
only to return tired and dehydrated

to the camp and eat wicked sandwiches and
skewered SPAM - gack, but it wasn't too bad

That night let us pass through with brilliance
and stars and jug o' wine, "Come to the Chateau"
I said to JIM and KURT as they perched on their tent
porch looking at the near-falling tree
(held up by thin dead branch)
and they marveled at the fact that they even slept the first
night.....under it

GRAEME and I stayed up long
after WES got up off the cooler and went to
his thermal warm mountain bag to dream
of the processes of vineyards in France and Southern CA
for they were churning hard in his stomach
while KEN occasionally got up from his tent
to piss out the JIM BEAM and would yell
about flashlights coming up the hill nearly
falling down all the time and wanting to smoke
more cigarettes

(this just made JIM nervous after all the
bad jokes about shotguns on the Appalachian
trail so he sat up silently and shined a light
into the wood)

Graeme and I up....
sat around the third party - FIRE
and it seemed that this second night of conversation
kicked the first night in the balls for we read poetry
and I just wanted to read from my novel
and prove I'm more than novelty
(I'm just being honest)

thereby
opening the door and creating our rite of passage
all talking about what we wanted to BE
such as a writer of essence or an economist

half-gallon of wine poured into bellies
and it seemed that we had gotten as far as we could
and had to go to bed, but if we would have been there the
next night it could have broken more ground

but we can only do so much
and we returned sentient rangers to our bags
and slept like babies in love with everything-
even that which we haven't even known

So what does Graeme do through the night?
but lay out these dinty-farts into our tent
which I had dreamed were mine and kept me
reveling in my sleep of healthy abdomens - BUT
they were his and I realized this went the sun became
too bright to ignore and we had to get up
and bring camp to an end

Not to long
we loaded everything accounting for
every once of trash and walking down the
Appalachian Trail (of which we had hiked
probably a whole .5 mile) and looked
like misguided mongols wishing
they had oxen

we did and got into them
(following each other in the technology

which had driven us to camp in the first place)
and drove to Dauphin only to walk
into a family diner so clean
and we so obviously smelling like
hung jerky to eat gravy sandwiches
and say goodbye after a few
'what the weekend would become'
snapshots

and it was that we
had a wonderfilled weekend
and appreciated each other through
the random 'what a jerk thought'
and we'll want to return soon
enough even though we got home and laid
upon our couches thinking,
'man, its great to be back'

so ends the story
of why we're anxious mofos and
why our eyes keep returning to maps
and trying to find which interstatement
leads to the neverending joy
and skirts the sorrow

for dudes **MUST** look at maps
and **DUDES MUST CAMP**
looking at each other
(though cross-eyed
from too much wine)
and meaning it

MOTIVES OUT ON MARS

I have no fucking idea
where the planets are aligned
at this moment in time

this is a message
from the innards of me
for if I could write
with the blood of my guts
you would easily see
the drying tip
of my small intestine
at the edge of these words

a poet screaming
is far better
than a president dreaming
for one lays between clean sheets
and claims he knows the nation
and the other one (naked)
howling from the porch
alone like a star
reclaiming the streets
wondering why progress
looks so much like
destruction

HOLDING MY COCK

the clock
has reached 7 am
and my girlfriend
lets the car idle before leaving
Pacific winter remains dark
and I am jobless
in the humbling recession

under the covers naked
so I'm holding my cock
and wondering what to do
sleep no longer rules
production and progress
on my own terms
dominates my veins

holding my cock
it is swollen and warm
my only friend for miles
and when I do go for that job
I'll look my boss in the eyes
as he pays me peanuts
and bends me over
I will think of these covers
and holding my cock underneath
knowing
he's got nothing on me

FIRST DAY OF THE HUNT

morning, October 12
I see the sky rim
begin to lighten and the stars
outen one after the other
as the coyotes lament
at their departure
away off in the dismal
western miles

there is no sound now
but the scratch of my pen
and the stir
of my breath

thinking of the shot
I determine that
the back half of the ass
is the point where all eternity
begins for sweating bloody flanks
vision pulsing as the light
is on the increase

the sun is swelling
and the back country goes from
freezing and below twenty to
hot like exhaust and in the 70's
such extremes occur at 12,000
feet as the shadows go away

poems of the hunt
drip from my shirt
like an early morning elk-skinning
Jim sliced with shiny knife

as I pulled the skin
from the cooling carcass

It is 2 pm
and I am on a log
between two pines
on the somehow-roof
of all that is
flat-top wilderness
not quite the Rockies
but somewhat of a bleacher
from which to behold their wonder

Under the conifer green
sit rotting silver stumps
of a logging age previous
much like scattered gravestones
for the big pine-daddies
that once were
spiraling earth-spears
groping for above

and LOOK! at little chippy-dee
I love him, so tiny
scampering on that dead tree
and I sit here
where? reading Desolation Angels
with a rifle close by
Winchester Model 70 30-06
and feel content
though the people world
is too close at hand
and I'd rather
turn my rifle to it
rather than the woodland cervid

such a misanthrope
in the mountains

sometimes
in these quiet moments
where the sky is huge
and a little more than reality-normal
I wish I could see Jack
Wahoo'in through the woods
and coming toward me
with a disheveled half-wonder
everything crooked
except the vertical jug of port
and the eyes look and talk
in such breezy silence
when he finally gets down
to me and I move my gun
so he can aim his ass at the stump
and he is not dead and rotted by time
but is here and now
maybe a ghost prophet
we could sit and work it all out
and....shaking hands the
questions still come and throb
and you'll still feel lonely
in the morning because you can't
figure out what it is

then Jack will go away
blowing like this dry wind
he being he
me being me
and those answer I dreamed about
never come
the dismal just gets bigger

THE RAINY DAYS ARE MINE

call my name
and time finds me far away
like looking at you
so many miles away
my head rotating
like some moon
around Jupiter

Hooray!
when the sky is enclosed
and the sun snubbed by earth
clouds and mist
peppering our faces and squints
so not able to see sky
and forgetting
universal questions

these days are mine
like a child's geranium
at the edge of window and sill
wanting puddles and something to do
and my head is a moon around Jupiter
always knowing
the above is true

DENVER DOGS

'we owe the world
more than a smudge
of our love'
I thought as we drove
into the reservations of the
justified (though fenced-in) citizenry
of Colorado

pulling beers
from the cooler in back
I went into my past
remembering days
trapped in the cult of first girlfriend
when I thought anorexia was
sexy and suddenly baptized
by hammer and childhood
stopped with a clamor

closer to Denver
we were passing autobodies
named Klark's Klean Kars (sick)
and drinking in bars with ashtrays
which had an Indian's proud face
in the middle (reduced to trinket)
under ash

drunker
two ships up above
one of light, one of sound
leaving their billowy trails behind
in the fiery sun
like HORIZON DRAGONS
gone to play where the sun

is always setting

large volumes of joy
finally bouncing down Denver streets
a neon mirthy picture
petered out in its tracks
for I was jesting with Hispanics
and suddenly they had me in their
brown hands and one was about to swing
a crutch into my face and
people yelled from a nearby bus, 'get on!'
but rather I doubled back around
to the sight of assault to get my pen
and hat just bought that day

angry and driving away from Denver
like beaten dogs my brother and I slept in the
mountains that night close to a dead horse
that we didn't know was there

in my sleeping bag I closed the
turvsey day with a thought, the
product of all the days and rocks
and dwarf pines in homage to all the
dead horses and dogs in the swollen world....

'the ringing in
your ears
when alone and silent
in the middle of
dead thick night
is just the backwash
from all the shit
thus far heard
in your life'

MOUNTAIN KNOWLEDGE

is good to be back in Pennsylvania
of wild and wooly Appalachia
where the snows last forever under oak
and time never falters a single stroke

I wake in the morning donning pajamas
thinking my thoughts....., “am I bananas?”
The events of yesterday are cooling stones
and like rank wood I leave them alone

of the amazing I no longer show
for it is miracle that I continue to grow
and trudging forward through world constipation
ripping my shoulders for some occupation

and the long-hair angelic ripping-voice
of the band leader and his dutiful boys
me standing before them all wrinkle-clothes drunk
UNSPEAKABLE VISIONS into what I have sunk

why not walk home ashamed in snow twenty miles
leaving far behind sweat and brothel smiles
for a warmer sanctuary in the town attic
of the sleeping naked women and the fanatic

MOUNTAIN KNOWLEDGE and outcrop truth
for where can immovable trees lead us in pursuit
we will leave the crawling and squirming masses
pack a modest lunch and head for the passes

looking back now from the crest of the ridge
we see houses and roads and crumbling bridge
and how the mountains know better that to be in the midst

of the crowded urbana and evil's endless list

the mountains know better than to involve the self
but tolerate a human like the tiny woodland elf
and the next time you go racing past woods and rivers
think for a moment of the of the peace the mountain deliv-
ers

IN THE WORD

from letters
come the forever
of which we occasionally speak
upon paper when we can't
express the mind fuck
for which we are feeling
when we have drank
2 strong glasses of vodka
with ice and dirty lemon
floating in it

into these words
we become the forever
constantly overwhelming
our childhoods and
what will be

the hardest thing
that ever was
is the **BIG NOTHING NOW**
which carries the hopeful charge
of tomorrow and more words
to eventually become a bridge
between poetaster and the tattered belief
that one of us will make it
upon our merits

WHITE TAIL

am cold
and tired
havin' gotten up at 3am
think I'm seeing things
brown head, black eyes
that peak between trees
and I try to tell the
difference between
shadows and furtive
deer that inch along
and bring winds as
their protectors as well as
birds that caw and
distract so that
they may pass and I
may miss the antlers
and never see them
only wiping snot from
nose as they go
disappearing into
the laurel and
tomorrow

BLOW

a hammer
from an old typewriter
hits the paper true as
GoD as the artist grits
teeth in painful pleasure
as a little piece
of the holy he is soldered
onto the pulp for ages

moments of pen glory
a timeless correspondence
letters of spontaneity
and literary doubt
our friends who believe
in us, we, them the artists
all the while they live
in different cities and
realities less common
than we can even realize
and pulling a creaking chair
to destitute table
finger stubs to the keys
looking out the window
one last time see sun
then turn and confront
the painful compassion
which swells in our chest
which drags us down
which foster isolation
and nurture grief
yet scream of desire
and make our lives
extraordinary and

so simply colossal

shaking head and hair
the inspiration lands
on the paper like great
artistic dandruff

leaning over the page
it all comes naturally
as your fingers
blow

THROUGH ALL THE MUDS

in my mind I ask of nothing great
but rather see myself in a large
random room with little furniture
large enough that my hands and
feet constantly are battling
the aching chills that flow
inward through sunny paned
window. Before me is the only
work I love and want to know - paper
and pencil needing some sharpening
and come the words in arrangements
that convey a calm gentle madness
and fury for the rolling world.
This is poetry - for someone
who shall spend his life
writing a million words which
no one shall ever see and will
eventually drag himself
to the grave through all the muds
clutching crumpled suicide note

TOO MUCH COFFEE

cars parked
and forgotten by crowd inside
as I was sitting on the back of a chair
your hand slapped me unaware
and instantly I knew
the time was of
yesterdays

filling our cups
not with beans but hops
and standing around
chatting as though
time was never lost or spoiled
telling stories of losing
our minds when not long
ago we never faltered

the left the three car DUI parade
behind New Cumberland in
attempt to avoid the
bored policeman traps
it was the first couple days
of March and the Susquehanna
ran full of melted snow-water

the streets of the Capitol
kicked and bucked our machinery
until we finally parked it al
outside of Pappy's flat to slip in
and smoke and drink some
while singing and harmonizing
Eee-yawh it was so magnificent

the magic hour of 5am had approached
and the cars outside rang of
morning traffic and tomorrow's business
so we layed back together listening
to Les Paul play while 40's women
sang beautiful from full bodies

I slipped out at 8am while you slept
giving you one last look before
grabbing my bags silently thanking
you just for being

we had both rested for the
nervousness and shudders that
would be thrust upon us through
the days ahead and we'd probably wonder
if it was us or the gallons of coffee
which gaves us the shakes
that were so unfamiliar

clearly though it is the mundane
and non-brilliant everyday that
challenges our extra-ordinary
as we entrench and launch into the battle
for Evermore Majesty

DAZE MUTINY

I never spilled over
full of confidence

riding along
like a black arab
keeping Amish to my views
walking such a mental llama
through the Andes of the mind

participants and non
yellow meat-peaches
coming my way
slowly to slip
through these hours

that old woman
squawking about
for her last few days
turning to smile like I approve
through the car window
how could bitterness
wake so early that
it beat me out of bed

reviving a tradition
hearing the thinning wail
of organizations made
because of man's self-niggling

there are weeds outside my window
but at least it is greenery
a belly button in the mirror
for a naked flesh-fandango

there is a king
living under this city
and you shall return daily
for you love men

when the world has robbed me
or I have sparsely given
of the most basic dreams
and my last Abe
has traded wallets
I fall back
into the bed of leaves
that I call
trust in you

TRIBUTE TO WOODPLANK

I come from
a higher archie
where the wind does rush
and the only calamity
is the displacement
of an ill-guided nose

go to the Indian
in the autumn which follows
after running down his world
and wishing to stop ours
where eagles refuse to fly

searches
and blundering swings
in the soupy dark
the long-hair died
the perfect bohemian death
smothered by paisley pillow
burned by candlelight
the decomposition
of his rebirth
upon a grass prayer mat
as the pumpkin seeds
were pulled

I came
in search of nothing
and left here
a flitting
blue morphid

HATHAWAY

a lonely address
scorched by a never-ending sun
a few cars parked forever
with weeds up through
their universal joints
in such a complete
saddle-sky town

the big hands of Jim
lay two cold beers
upon his wisest table
where my brother and I sit
and watch him finish up the car
cleaning a windshield
almost spotless

his smile broke but a fraction
on his taugt battle-front face
retired now as Post Master
yet still holding his own
as willful bartender

Hathaway tumbles on
as old as the indian wars
and no bigger than a stones throw
local legends have ceased to grow
but they will still walk the hall
tomorrow

the doors of mirth slam shut
at an isolated respectable hour
in a land that echoes, 'who cares?'
as another chew dances around spittoon

and Ray sits upon the stool
this night there were infant(esimal) smiles
dancing 'til the knees got weak

Look!
you passing eye
this is the holy bracken of MonTANA
holding determined fast
as time goes howling overhead
and though the people
may chose to go
how Hathaway will go dancing on
someday when they're dead

TUSK

dark brooding candles
my room gets heavier upon
lighting the wicks

God damn!
the phone is ringing again
maturely wishing it was never invented
and I in my sweats and shakes
run like spilling madness
tripping over slippers
which I left there the night before
watching late-night television
and all the soured-funny people
marvelous

after scratching a few words to note
I return to where I had left off
noticing things have changed
marvelous

another-day doldrums
cracking me open like a yolkless egg
and as the sun is setting
I turn and see huge in my living room
the rhino of expression
breathing through nostrils at me

quickly turning around
as though to deny I type something
quickly lame and without thinking
and suddenly my chest explodes with
hot blood upon the page (now soaked)
impaled upon the tusk
marvelous

WHISTLING INTO THE FIRE

in the wilderness
of the Shenandoah alone
smoking the woods
to a ruddy scent of hickory
I do my small part
to inspire the world
and become a forest dweller
when other places don't fit

stood at the edge of the river bank
thinking of the smothered rocks
under the cold virgin water
I reached into my pockets for a wish
and watched the coins
winking at me
on their journey to the bed

a cloaked shadow underneath the leaves
which burst out from the curving trees
makes a man wonder of all his deeds
this light-hearted wilderness
is just a whiter shade of me

turning back to the fire
I notice the passing of time
and another logs falls in turn
while I'm watching
my gathered wood burn
and whistling lost songs
into the fire

GRANDOG

grandog
have I seen
your drawn ebony statue
waiting as the moon ran across the sky
given a lifetime to count heavenly bodies
how those eyes pierce forwards
as a wind blows to match your thought
then build around you
such precious things to do
all the sticks which lie beneath
live for the moment to set free
and the wood takes to the air
quickly your arrow is let fly
thus we go pouncing on together
making up for time apart
these two lives chasing
the joy that is there
in the heart

DOWN THE PULPIT

through a hole in the glove
on a face spoke frostbite
woolen black plaid jackets
picking axe waits corner-bound
segments of trapped snow
inside season's garnished doors
take adventures as water
able to be so far away
to have never heard a city sound
onto these forever mountains
run the gravies of the year
finding the mirth like second skin
are the glorious red of neck
and a kettle burns black
while we were outside in an instant
and walking to the pulpit
red runners on a fashioned sled
cast long jumping shadows
upon a freezing campfire sky
taking our first long drags of bourbon
growing up in dizzy instants
stamping jigs of numbing feet
smiles engulfing the brittle air
a laugh shot into the night
communion of stumps around the embers
wisps of steel on ice fill the wood
gaining speed upon cold ground
approaching the threshold of flight
your hat went to the stars
such open space and freedom choose
coattails flew and so did you

ALL THE WAY TO THE COUNTRY

he woke up so early
and gave himself away
with his jeans unraveling in the wind
he packed up all of his paisley shirts
and tucked his wallet
in back pocket

just then the rolling began
with a jacket under his legs
and a hand upon his crazy hat
his arm crooked through the window
in high-ordained hick-fashion

the fog just wouldn't lift
he chased it and cried out
feeling like the sun he would burn
all the way to the country

SENTENCED

the employed are poor-witless, or at least a calloused wisdom that rolls off the back of chapped and worried hands as those hands rub back and forth at dinner time in anticipation of cheap bread and Morton turkey pot pie coming from a crooked oven that has so lapsed into disrepair due to a thoughtless landlord given to wild trips and spins about the clogged polluted highways in a shiny new BMovementW while toiling america stairs out its windows at mountains and plains before heading to the factory or the office chair where they spend most of their life and they hesitate on the steps of the building as they can no longer build dams in creeks so their heads hang and they go in - the lottery more a hope for salvation than any president they can ever vote for (sad) and their cigarette butts collect right by the corrugated iron steps (tobacco vacation from the reality-acid) and they place their lunch of Strohman and bologna and snak-pak in the company refrigerator and assume the stance or plop their ass in front of the machine which they get to know better than any other person they've ever been related to (industrious revolution!) in an area no larger than 3' by 5' square as the machine keeps spinning and humming and making money yet the worker is getting tired and fool-weary of the machine and it is probably the same thing that happened with our poor once-beautiful world machine (encased in human capsule) and our creator has probably just thrown up hands and walked away losing interest and regretting omnipotence with all this and yet we still question like children with too many questions, "WHY WOULD CREATOR DO THIS?" (all the earthquakes and tsunamis) and we can only deduce that he has looked at this thing (twisted pack of highways and skyrippers in a heavy sauce of mustard gas and sandblasters) has tragically become one colossal shit dropped from the clouds and should dry doggy-drop white and blow away but then again or rather we are all still passed through our blessed mother (fleshy warm pass to the rocky cold world) and told that all of this progress (also known as destruction) is GOOD and WE are justified by GoD in his toils and we walk out of church shaking and nodding in mature agreement but some few question and say, "why did they mow down that forest to build the quick mart", but by this time we have spent enough time with our friends to question all the world instructions attached to the package and know it is bunko bullshit so we start to smoke and drink and do drugs in pagan hope that it will all stop (the death of the earth) even though all the doctors of the stuffy highrise residency have decided for us that all that is no good (so no smoking natural tobakEE in the controlled-air medical oficina) and the young growing older behind crooked jaded shades know better and figure the puzzle out but are powerless to act against the cufflinks and perks (the soul-selling religious wealth of american opportunity - an evil now covering 3 to 4 continents and growing) and see the world truer because they have not been persuaded nor won over by any cause (war nor espionage) and don't chant a fat finger full of spitting words preaching against that which is evil (which is really good!) and harsher is the fact that these young grown older see their friends slowly torn away and moving to different locales across the darkened NORTH

american quilt because they had to get a job (having read the world INSTRUCTIONS) and leave a place they were happy witheEEEEWHY?...a young person growing older asks the self as the clock (spinning and humming on General Electric workings) approaches the hour when they rise with the sun (often before it) and are divorced from home and toil in a cause in some business where SHOWING UP and HARD WORK are not enough for they must see the glimmer in your eye that you have committed (possibly a crime) to them your only pride.....their tongues grow confused there and unnatural as the wisdom fades and they are out-numbered and can only say, "Uhm.....uh...darrhhh....uh".....so the confusion mounts and enters loneliness and spent dreams and more drugs yet the morning becomes a burden (daily adjusted their values - fooling themselves to get through another disillusioned day) as they pace through life naked and forlorn in the swamp (weeds and jumping frogs collecting on the thighs and one thousand earwigs tumbling down their shoulders as they cry).....cutting off their hair to lessen the weight for the ultimate departure and (unavoidable) journey into the mountains of the befuddled mind wandering about local SUPER?markets looking at each other afraid to get to know for it just may be harding to sympathize than to continue trying to deal so they go on passing one another only musing, "WHAT THE FUCK?;" through the aisles of some seriously over-rated shit and it is all shit when you lean to one side and use that toilet tissue (giant brand : flush) and checking it out to make sure you've gotten every last (stinky) bit and you rise afterwards and look in the mirror and question it all...look in the mirror and cannot move because of that feeling in your bowels (sluggish - like america that is slowing down after shitting out all the accumulated stench and putridness) and I do declare that I am nude and smell spurnful with hair all bed-headed and I am pissed in america (3 to 4 continents - a globally mental-imperialism) and on my own terms of passage to a life created within a room filled with paisley and stained sheets of a past distinction that is now a smoking heap of dried LSD as the traffic-asthma cough which produces a little phlegm on the paper between words about shitty america and movements of a society that is caught like a hamster in the never-ending spherical lie made so long ago it eludes discovery and I will leaves these words (d'rather they'd be happier) in the typewriter to be picked up by someone else (tracking the lie like FRENCH trapper) because here is a person who is searching for some truth and meaning in the maze built by us and it is somewhere sunk in the river of america and the quest will never end until it is plucked up out of the water like a muddy Packard at the end of a crane and I stand at the edge of the Mississippi (containing mostly chemicals from rusting Ohio and Pennsylvania) and die happily upon the bank of wonder that has gone through my enamored head like barbed wire through my asshole and I tumble into the river.....of AMERICA in the nineties....floating in bliss...SENTENCED to this.....