

**Even Sweat Can Smile**

## **greedy fuck**

give me rye manhattans on the river bend|women with deep eyes and deeper souls|red wine|full moons|smiling babies|psilocybin sunsets|conversation 'til sunrise|good grass|better sex|uniformity|individuality|neither

give me open roads|blues|jazz|rock'n'roll|thunder storms|sweltering heat|yellow-paged literature|rocky mountains|painted deserts

give me Cassady|Picasso|Vonnegut|Tesla|Kerouac|Kesey|Huxley|Thompson|Cobain|Watts|Bradbury|Shelley (Mary)|Ginsberg|Thoreau|Einstein|Beefheart|Hicks|Snyder|Pound|Miller

give me people that love me back|hate me|make eye contact|hug with both arms and a heart|cry|open their souls|shut out ego|slap my wrists when i'm bad

give me weekends with Mother N.|Sundays with Jesus|fifteen minutes with Buddha|a lifetime with Myself|one second with You|Eternity with the Whole

give me interstate light poles|fine point pens|aloe vera|high pulp orange juice|kettle corn|green gummy bears|alliteration|back dimples|natural morning light|double espresso|fashionable lateness|birds singing|summertime blackberries|New Orleans hobos|comfortable silence|banana ice cream|cigarette stench

give me neck hickeys|black eyes|ingrown toenails|pubic bush|garlic sweat|morning breath

give me the world|all of it|every last bite|the good|the bad|the ugly|put it in my knapsack|shove it in my pocket|tell me to forget it|so i'm surprised when i remember

## **sitting next to a stranger on the bus**

does it make you uncomfortable?  
when i say that through my eyes  
you are God and God is you  
and the same goes for me too

or that i've felt my Self disintegrate  
on the levee's grassy pasture  
and what was left of the So-Called-Me  
wept with gratitude of life  
until i put myself back together  
better than before

or that perhaps our world does not exist  
when we close our eyes to sleep  
or before we were born  
or after we die

or maybe it always has and always will

does it make you uncomfortable?  
when i suggest that you and i are specks of bacteria  
in another sentient being's gut,  
in some other universe,  
and whole other universes  
exist within our guts

or when i claim that  
as infinite as our universe sprawls,  
so does your mind

or when you look into the eyes  
of someone you hate,  
you're self-destructing

or that Adolf Hitler, the Killer of Jews,  
was as important as  
Jesus Christ, the King of Them,  
and both of them as much as  
the Spider you squashed yesterday

and that maybe Death isn't the arrival  
of Heaven Hell Oblivion Rebirth  
but rather a Pitstop of Experience,  
another leg of the journey,  
another temporary lover in the sea of them,  
just as life had been

does it make you uncomfortable?  
that i might giggle to myself  
when someone utters the words

reality check

because what does that mean  
when humans are restricted to a slim spectrum  
of what our eyes, ears, mouth, skin, and nose

can give us through the brain?

perhaps our reality is only 98.5  
on the FM Channels of Consciousness  
and what about all the others on AM

and what about when i say  
whom you vote for doesn't matter?  
because most candidates have the enlarged ego  
that encouraged them to run in the first place,  
and we're all doomed to the same fate anyway,  
the fate where no matter what happens on capitol hill,

everything will be okay in the end

and that anything you do in this life  
is in vain if it doesn't come from  
a place of Love Compassion Empathy

and that we all come from the same elements  
that formed the stars you stare at on clear nights,  
and perhaps we're not sure why it all started,  
but it doesn't matter where we came from or why,  
but rather what we are doing  
in the Infinite  
Moment after Moment  
of the Universe experiencing itself  
subjectively through me you everyone  
until that subjectiveness ends  
and we return to the stars  
to fertilize future whatever-might-be

does it make you uncomfortable?  
when i say that focusing on negative  
means tightening the proverbial noose  
around your neck  
and provoking the executioner  
to kick the chair out from under you  
before you've got a final glimpse of beauty

because you and i  
are so insignificant  
to the happenings of this Universe,  
having no control on the past  
and little affect on the big-scheme-of-things' future,  
but that is what makes our microscopic existence  
so significant after all

because we have the chance  
to let the inevitable bad go  
and to live freely, how we choose,  
drinking up the pleasures of life  
because our insignificance begs the question:  
why not?

maybe Eve had it right when she took that bite  
maybe Adam had an eye for opportunity in his lover  
maybe we had to have been there to understand

are you uncomfortable yet?  
are you squirming in your seat?  
has the opinion of another  
caused you to melt into a puddle  
of insecurity?

i was once  
and i still am sometimes  
a puddle  
because these thoughts were not always my thoughts,  
and they will not always be my thoughts  
because impermanence is permanent  
and they may never be yours,  
but they've dared me to question  
until the answers come  
and then question Further  
because that's all this life is

a question

and the answer does not matter

discomfort is a question  
a question is the answer most of the time

so pull yourself together  
because life is a question  
life is being uncomfortable  
life is not an infallible answer,  
and the moment it is,  
you might as well be dead

no —  
not dead

outside of death  
outside of life  
outside of it all

does that make you uncomfortable?

xx

i knew a woman once who is the sweetest woman i ever dated. she squealed when she saw me, cut my toenails, and made me laugh at everything. i loved her the most and hurt her the most. i still look for her at my family's Christmas gatherings or at our favorite restaurants. i miss her all of the time.

i knew a woman once who told me secrets she never told anyone. she loved heroin more than she loved me, but i don't resent her because she taught me what it means to love unconditionally. i was always picking her up from strange places. other people didn't understand. she was a sweet girl but a sad girl too.

i knew a woman once who conquered all of my sexual landmarks, except for the most coveted. i fainted in her dead grandparents' house one humid Louisiana evening after we smoked pot and i stood up too fast. i was terrified of her father, but she sure was fun.

i knew a woman once who said she was sexually aroused by the thought of sitting bare-ass on a cake. she invited me to be a traveling vagabond with her, first stop: the Grand Tetons. i told her i couldn't miss work. i don't even remember her name, but for a few hours, we were in love.

i knew a woman once who said i was an ass and lacked self-esteem. she was probably right at the time. she made homemade candies and had an accent that i adored more than i adored her. my aunt has fitness class with her.

i knew a woman once who kept me sane when i needed it the most. she feels the world like i feel the world. one time we sat talking on a foot bridge until three in the morning about everything with the mosquitos. i don't think either of us could forget that night.

i knew a woman once who said we would make beautiful children, and i agreed. she works on surfboards and has a smile that makes you forget your name, but you'll never forget hers. she has a boyfriend who she loves i think, and i am happy about that.

i knew a woman once who was quite peculiar in the most splendid way. i've never met a person like her since. she is pensive. she is elegant. she ponders the universe with her cat and dog; i never told her exactly how i felt, and she said we were not meant to be. i write her letters that i never mail.

i knew a woman once who ended up wearing my tie dye shirt the day after. she is soft spoken and infinitely kind. she made me coffee in the mornings after we showered, but we never got to see where things might have led.

they all stay in my heart and probably always will, even if they forget about me. it's hard to forget about a woman who touches a certain part of you like other people can't, then eventually goes off to touch some other poor sap who probably needs it more.

## **why?**

why these eyes and why this hair?  
why these worries and why this care?  
why ten fingers and why ten toes?  
why these pimples and big nose?  
why this name and why these lips?  
why a human and not a fish?  
why my mom and why my dad?  
why do some days make me sad?  
why must we work all day long?  
why do we lose the child's sing song?  
why does the sun burn orange above?  
why do we endure the risk of love?  
why can we speak and why do we breathe?  
why do we feel the need to deceive?  
why can't we leave our mother planet?  
why do we choose to destroy her, dammit?  
why is the moon so beautiful?  
why is hate sometimes excusable?  
why is there anything at all?  
why does my existence seem so small?  
why these questions and all these words?  
why does my voice sound so absurd?  
why was i born on a day in October?  
why do we fear the day the cycle starts all over?

### **clark creek ramblin**

solitude road solitude toad  
rest in peace  
on five leaves of green  
mister arachnid came to see  
and hear my simple eulogy  
though different shells  
all the same organized chaos  
in the stream and  
beneath the diamond white skies  
of Nothing, the reflection  
of ourselves  
on grade school coloring books

vagina dentata, hakuna matata  
animals are better than humans  
says the felled tree,  
and can't you see  
there is no wrong way  
in the woods,  
despite the signs  
you silly man,  
twisting Nature's elbows  
any way you can,  
but the woods will play tricks on you,  
when the critters come out to dance  
and all the flora looks the same,  
man begins to doubt himself,  
is this a dream,  
are the leaves deceiving me,  
i hear their whispers,  
they have their fun,  
and man begins to fret  
the steady setting sun,  
round and round and round  
like the bubbles in the creek  
like the suffering of Eternity

breathe in, breathe out  
upon the crown of the hill,  
he ran away he can't be still  
a silence that must be filled,  
so hurry hurry run along  
play the part, sing the song  
of man the disconnected primal beast,  
he thinks he's special  
on his two standing feet,  
but the woods could eat him whole,  
though they don't  
for self control  
is something we have forgotten,  
something that can't be bought in  
the supermarket or the mall

sit in the stream and paint yourself,  
put the I of the You  
up on the living shelf,



be the child your mother misses,  
pretend the breeze are her sweet kisses  
a wise old dharma bum once said  
nature ain't a place to visit  
it's a home instead,  
and he's right you know,  
despite your industrial throne,  
we'll all be home again one day,  
six feet below  
rotting in the clay,  
just like the toad i laid to rest  
beneath the silt  
that seemed the best