

## Travels Looking For Myself

### Postcard from India

#### Benares

Ganges early morning  
Sun comes pale pink  
Rising out of dust horizon  
Long warm days before monsoon.  
Stone and concrete reflect the day's new light  
Gold temple tops cast daytime stars onto this timeless river.  
Dugouts float past, barely moving  
Oars creak  
Temple bells toll  
Voices over water . . . hushed.  
A trail of laundrymen beat shirts, and sheets and saris  
Against rocks worn smooth so many lives ago  
No one remembers.  
Songs and whopping echo down this holy river.  
Krishna! Whop! Om Shanti! Whop! Jai Rama! Whop!

Vultures soar patiently above us  
Without effort  
Gliding through blue fog mist  
Mingle with smoke from burning ghats  
Along the shore  
The end and the beginning.

Postcard from San Francisco

**Free Concert**

Sunday in the park  
September - San Francisco  
Band Shell orchestra  
Beneath the last of warming suns  
Conductor taps his wand  
Preparing for the anthem.  
Some now stand  
But others are too old, or tired.

A flock of pigeons flare above us  
Startled by the sudden blare of brass and drums  
Their loose formation makes a graceful, sweeping curve  
With military grace  
Above the scattered crowd.  
Eye glasses glitter  
Watching as they wheel against a hard blue sky  
Returning bravely to their nests when the triumphant noise has ended  
They know the score.

## Postcard from Amsterdam



### **Red Light District**

Mental jailbreak from the puritanic laws made by the bourgeoisie

Unending hordes of back-packed youth

Throng happily along the tree lined sun-warmed summer's

Narrow streets along a maze of glittering canals

Reflecting dappled ripples

A Seurat of colors

Leaf green, sky blue, golden sun

Parade of small boats

Sidewalks bestrewn with necklaces of bars, youth hostels

Small two star hotels.

Live costumed manikins rap store-front windows

Call to passers by

"Hey baby... let me show you something you have never seen before."

Live sex shows glitter noonday neon above touts

Who beckon while awaiting guided tour groups  
Sure to come along this evening  
Giddy with excitement.

Coffee shops abound for every taste and nationality  
Dispense bouquets of marijuana and hashish from within  
Where cigarettes are not allowed.  
Small groups are gathered joyfully at tables  
Rolling joints . . . discussing favorite blends  
Hushed conversations  
Music  
Smoothies  
Fresh fruit blended by tattooed baristas  
Dutch Big-Easy.

Early Morning streets near vacant  
Lingering smell of beer  
Street cleaners wuzzing slowly by  
An early morning prostitute  
Stands in her doorway  
Savoring the cool post-dawn.

What cause to leave this place  
Save winter's bleak and cold respite from joy  
And jobs from which we can't afford escape.

## Postcard from Kowloon

### **Chungking Mansions**

Third world Casablanca

Smell of spices and fried foods

Rise from a first floor farmers market

Jewelry on the cheap

Watches and cell phones

Might last for a week. . . three if you're lucky.

Labyrinth of aisles and warrens

Maze of small shops

Harried clerks and throngs of customers

Newspapers from a world of nations

Money changers

Foods of any taste

Illumination is forever fluorescent

High noon to midnight.

There's an edgy, gritty feel

Above all this

Some twenty floors of small one-star hotels

Rest stops for immigrants and new arrivals

Lonely Planet tourists

Travelers of low means.

A constant rattle of Mahjong tiles echo in the air shaft by my window

Looking out on other rooms the same as mine

The price is right

Stay here a day or two at most.

On my way out this early morning

Passing still closed shops

The biggest rat I've ever seen.

Postcard from Buzios, Brazil

**Yemanja**

Evening in Buzios

Warm sea breeze comes ashore

Caressing . . . sultry breath of oceans.

Fishing boats rock gently

Flashlights blinking from on board

As crews make ready for the coming day.

They call the sea Yemanja here

She is alive

A personality with changing moods that beckon those on land

With siren's playfulness . . . evocative

The promise of adventure

Whispered in the sound of crashing waves:

Do not forsake me

There is no good reason for a man to leave the sea

I'm everything you want

Your greatest love

Both life and death

All things between.

Her implorations spill from arms that want to hold forever

See her cool wet shadow slipping through the sand

Returning to drowned lovers.