

## The Bird Slayer

I was thinking of you and then  
you walked into the clearing.  
This was how our thoughts aligned,  
like when you squeegeed the glass clean,  
and I called you the bird slayer.  
Just then, a flicker hit the window.

My heart sank as it fell to its secrets,  
my eyes trailing downward, glancing  
the tattoo wrapped around your leg  
as if you had fallen through a nest  
into a diary I wasn't part of, written  
beneath the light of places other.

And we had sampled many places,  
from national parks and casinos  
to trailer parks and mansions.  
Living on the road together,  
we crashed a lot of parties.  
We celebrated trespass.

The host asked us who we knew there,  
and you'd name off so and so, and so  
the fictional names from a book you'd read  
were from the host's favorite author.  
He cleverly describes the plot.  
You smile into each other knowingly;

myself just relieved we're home-free,  
but I'd never read the book,  
didn't catch the betrayal.  
So I slip off to get a cold beverage,  
and looking back, thinking of your wit,  
see you go upstairs with him.

## Awakening In Paradise Valley

Walking across the tightly  
mowed grass in dampening socks,

it was though the Earth peered  
up through points of acupuncture.

In the beginning there was pain  
and from pain came the five senses.

The Earth still traveling up  
into my spine, my fingers, my throat;

all day yesterday I served you,  
my feet aching in two thousand voices

chattering about what isn't finished.  
Today I am free, something else

has taken charge, like winged angels  
with an RV gating the stratosphere,

and we're all going to Yellowstone  
to waller among the geysers.

The old memories bubble up  
filling an underground organ

until the pressure is just too much,  
and the laser of regret releases.

I walk back to you, my feet now wet,  
my thirst quenched; the air too fresh.

The fight is over and the kids are asleep,  
the white water of their dreams downstream.

## A Walk In The Upper Basin

Faith was in the regular; chaos made  
predictable, as though the holy ghost  
erupted from purgatory every 90 minutes.

I prefer the imperfections  
of the literal, a synecdoche  
hidden into the names  
of these sacred sores dotting the earth,  
but nature chooses  
the time and the place  
no matter how I glamorize her wounds.

Like a teapot, the passage of a vessel  
is endless, even before the clay was molded,  
I pretend time and space, I pretend  
as though nature were a my siren,  
her mischief merely my unconscious,  
or why bother with a name because  
someone once washed our clothes in her  
spring until one day she exploded  
spewing laundry all over the stage,  
which then turned to bronze and silver.

One little squirt, and the gnome  
spirals out of context, their best trick yet.  
Names, games, and auto-mobiles;  
crown jewels made from clouds;  
day dreams propelled wildly from what I walk over  
as my eyeballs roll around on windmills of fantasy:

The anemone;  
the big anemone;  
the little anemone:  
size flickers through the ragged spume  
of relative experience, as does  
the plume of its erratic grammar, images  
which buzz through the beehive  
of my categories as I go for a walk  
in the basin, my mind number crunching  
the hot pots of homonyms,  
scissors made of water angling to cut out

from the end points of a full spectrum,  
punned coincidences, like pots of gold.

This lion is complex,  
his arguments full of holes,  
he teaches the cub through contradiction.  
He argues with the lioness,  
he argues with the big cub  
with his goggles on;  
and goggles that only see north,  
and goggles for his ears,  
and goggles worn as a pendant  
flapping algous down his chest  
like a wing of jelly under water,  
until he flops onto the beach.

His beach without a container.  
His solitary world of interpretation,  
iron faces in an aurum of joy, angry lead  
alchemy, I change the subject.

I have doublet values-speak,  
and values-do pump words  
onto the sponge of the plate eaten from.

Boardwalk tourist-idiom-speak;  
our gamble on social ritual  
as I slide my truth into the slot  
and call out for the giantess.

And here she comes with her tea kettle,  
she comes to serve the holy infant  
born from the virgin vault,  
polysyllabic words mottled in her hair  
like peanuts in the upturned roots  
of concepts butter-flied from their dome.

I am the experimental model.  
I am the dragon.  
I am the roof under which I sit  
on my little bench, with my little sprinkler,  
and my spatter of big talk;  
my castle built on sand;

my tortoise shell over the hot spot  
which slowly travels an inch a year  
over purgatory's tilt  
until one day the talk has crested,  
the terra cotta truth has shattered  
in the dishpan of history  
and the wash tub of accidental fiction,  
and art's little spanker  
has poked it's nose up life's chimney cone  
and scalloped non-fiction of it's rights,  
deleting the myth of righteousness,  
run it's tall tales though the sawmill,  
having churned it's pretense into butter.

But the sawmill is uncertain  
and my aim is tardy  
as it dangles from my wrist,  
the penta-churn of my repetitions  
shown to be spasmodic as I try  
to enter the oval of what I was told.

So I keep on walking, taking my time;  
taking my old tardy interpretations  
and crystallizing them  
into the grand complexity of reason  
like a bulgur philosopher  
with his east, west and north triplet theology  
percolating from pre-secular theories.

I walk. I walk in the rift of daydreams hummed out,  
venting separately from my woven turban,  
my grand eloquence of inarticulate surrealism.

My shoes of intuition feeling out  
the economics of wandering around;  
wandering around the basin  
on a wave of creativity:

All the cracks I walk over,  
all the beauty and chromatic clouds  
which cauldron like a lime kiln  
in the orange inkwell of my imagination.

The oblong arguments inside me,  
stimulated by the new,  
dramatized in a giant complex  
of catfish verbs and mastiff nouns,  
turtle adjectives and platform vents  
which exit from the round of my singing lips,  
pears plucked ripe  
in a daisy chain of subliminal slips  
stolen from the bank of brilliant hell,  
steaming comets from the  
overheated radiator of splendid concern  
and murky questions pyramided  
until the mud pool of ignorance,  
and the punch bowl of self-deception  
dump their heads into the black sand  
of the demons cave, a grotto to banality,  
a rocket of genius snuffed out  
in the riverside where I stick  
my tired feet into the water,  
stretching out my back, my vertebra  
like a chain of lakes  
filling the culvert of ridiculous positions  
with a square spring, link by link,  
until the clasps of Reason  
have been loosened of their spiteful and fanning  
mortar, freeing the blocks of darkness  
like a morning glory of visualization.

But the serpent's tongue is sentinel,  
licking Artemesia's restless thoughts in waves,  
an atomizer of the slide show in my mind,  
my best wishes, and better ambitions,  
forged in their content to cathos,  
scriptural arthritis, the sprite of dialogue  
returned to the hillside with only the hope  
that some seismic change in the social order  
breaks the ochrous cone that has come  
to repress my mind with the preconceived.

The carapace of learned opinions  
disguised under a cape of skeletal elocution,  
resisting bigfoot original ideas,  
falling familiar in the fantail of newspapers

littering the three meal day  
like biscuits and gravy, my walk  
in the basin on the old road  
past the group think and the baby daisy  
demise of truly original thought,  
the mercury of transgressing the dusty  
norms, and rusty anti-intellectual  
islands surrounding my black opal,  
my sapphire and jewel brain damage  
which is but a spring-loaded shell,  
a silver globe, a silver globe cave  
paired and split, sprung and evacuated;  
purple as mustard,  
bright as black pearls,  
smooth as coral  
drooping into its fumarole of contradiction:

As silent as a whistle, as seedless as  
cucumbers is the spouter of my ragged  
theories, as I fantasize my way off  
this cliff, this green work ethic, this  
handkerchief wrapped rainbow over my  
eyes as my summer sun-sets, and the  
mugwump of our happy delusions  
about the right to go to war, to sleep  
with figurative sisters, or literal cousins,  
or the trail of craters pocketing the DNA  
of tradition, law, and consumer marketing.

The myriad think tanks, and round  
about lies on talk radio, and other  
abuses of rhetoric which gutter the  
white lactose of caucasian superiority,  
and Midas mistakes of my Americanism  
as I bend the rules, but hey,  
I am received.  
I am employed.  
I am sitting in the Bear Pit Lounge  
at The Old Faithful Inn, drinking Moose Drool.