

## **Mountain Roosters**

Woke in the morning, weak in the mind,  
grabbed the grain but could not find

one benny hen of my whole damned passel  
and begun to think of the last night's hassle.

The cock on the hill, crowing at two  
saw me sipping the morning dew.

Hung up and over, I woke at eight  
to find the bastard crowing late.

In the night he stole my good Domineckers.  
Mountain roosters – clever peckers.

## **The Tools**

I'm a drunken fool  
with a trunk of tools  
and not one was stole nor borrowed.

Each one is mine,  
both beer and wine,  
and I walk the hill tomorrow.

The crest and fall,  
the walk and crawl,  
the holler calls me waken.

The moss and creatures,  
the early peepers;  
lost features frost has taken.

Does the man on the mount  
make a sound  
or does he ride one down around there?

Just let him ride,  
of his drink, abide.  
Let him drink his pride and founder.

I'm a drunken fool  
with a trunk full of tools  
and not one rule between them.

When I die, oh Lord,  
take my shield and sword,  
for I fear the Devil's seen them.

## **My Father as an Inuit Hunter**

He chews the bones to make the boat.  
He sews his jacket down to its leathery top  
and looks a lot like a sea dragon,  
dragging his pride behind him;  
losing himself in the frozen water.  
Gone huntin',  
running reindeer down stream  
until they collapse like a dream  
on a rocky shoreline.  
By the time he drags it home,  
it'll be past supper.  
He won't mind  
and he'll skin the deer in the dark  
to hang overnight like a roof over our heads,  
which we also have him to thank for.  
Lord knows he gets shit done.  
And I grew up thinking  
my father was a native.

## Haystack, Highlights, and Silk

Ain't she a wise woman?  
A sly woman.  
A know-your-own-shoulders,  
sit back and sigh woman.

T-shirt,  
hard hands,  
right for making a man.  
*Dang.*  
She done made me, didn't she?

There's more down the line.  
They're thick as thieves.  
Haystack and Highlights,  
them cackling hens,  
I wonder what they believe.

Silk is still sitting,  
the prettier she's getting.  
It'd put a good wine to shame.

Haystack and Highlights  
would kill a man outright.  
But Silk rubs her shoulders  
and turns the world over  
and surely I knowed her  
by the back, so I told her:

Ma'am, I'm obliged  
just to sit by your side.  
Her face is hiding  
but I know she's smiling  
a mile wide and wiling  
her whole life away.

## **Genghis**

*Jubal*

Genghis rings the doorbell  
and straightens up his robes  
and precious jewels dangle from his ear lobes.  
When the door opens, he enters.  
He don't need no invitation 'round here  
and 'round here is everywhere, in case you didn't know.

Genghis has his son,  
and his son has his son  
and so on and so on  
until we reach the now.  
Genghis likes culture  
and by god, he's vulture  
picking the bones of our holy cows.

We got our own Genghis  
like everyone else.  
Maybe you're too afraid  
to see the Genghis in yourselves.  
But if you're scared of Genghis  
remember he's long gone.  
Praise be to our emperor,  
the little Jubal Khan.

He's a ruler of rulers,  
giving orders to yard sticks.  
He's playing with oranges  
in the floor at the market.  
By god, he's a baby  
who'll soon be a man.  
He'll have no emotions.  
He'll not give a damn.  
If he scrapes his knee,  
he'll not cry like a girl.  
He may never love,  
but he'll soon rule the world.

And that's the trade  
that old Genghis made  
when he conquered the countries  
on a quest to get laid.

He don't talk about feelings.  
He don't say I love you.  
He don't think there's a God up above.  
He might think it's him,  
or the fate of all men,  
who don't know what it is to feel love.