

The Verse Thing

Now, children, you know that God is like unto many different things, and one of the things that God is like unto - God is like unto a poem.

And, children, you know that a poem is like unto many different things, and one of the things that a poem is like unto - a poem is like unto a folding chair.

Because, children, if you open your heart to the poem, you can sit down inside the poem, and the poem will provide you with rest and a wonderful place from which to view the world.

But, children, if you close your heart to the poem, the poem will slam shut and fall to the floor, and it won't be worth a damn.

So, children, if you've gotten a little behind in your reading, don't be ashamed, sit up and look around, you'll see you're in the right place, because, children, poetry is the verse thing that could happen to you.

CABO SAN LUCAS

Inauguration

Bird,
bird, bird, bird, bird, bird, bird, bird, bird,
bird, bird, bird, bird,

Drip,
drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip,
drip, drip, drip, drip, drip, drip,

Bird drip.

CLAUDE MERINGUE

Running Among Skulls of Desire

I was walking
in dreams of water,
when a wave of horses
turned my tongue to wings,

A stone of blood
flew to my heart
like a cabbage,

Never and forever,
the terrible teeth
in a room of shredding flesh,

I have found,
like a toy airplane,
the forceful gun
of the river of the future,

Now, I am alive,
like a man born
without lips
of crabgrass.

Fecund Stooage

Bubble dawn, the bloodless dead,
finger slats of the moongate,
the seasonal helix of verdant bursts,

Fecund stooage,
the doomed parse of black,

She stood guard, as I clawed
the enormous shell of the cascading whisper
of the apoplexy of the disconsolate sea.

I am the flesh bald empty room
ravaging the lacy dawn,
no radio could muscle a kiss
from her unaddressed foreign currency,

I tore my fitted sheets bellywide, she
fluffed her bone and tattooed apart,
we compressed into the complacent
dream of the unadorned frown,

As a pregnant overcoat
meets with an steel butterfly
on the multiplication table of love.

AMANDA RECKINWITH

The Woman I Am is the Woman I Am

I am the truck stop WOMAN

I am the baseball WOMAN

I am the undertaker's wife, model
wife, uptight, love to fight WOMAN

I am the La Brea Tar Pit WOMAN

I am the fuzzy sweater WOMAN

I am the incubator WOMAN

I am the street-under-construction WOMAN

I am the Miss Pecan Pie WOMAN

I am the blue eyes, the brown eyes, the albino,
the evil-eyed-woman-of-your-dreams WOMAN

I am the false-eyelash, the real-whiplash WOMAN

I am the hubcap WOMAN

I am the underwear WOMAN and the outworn,
the shopworn, the Early Warning System WOMAN

I am the long hair, the short hair, the in despair, the unfair,
the au contraire, the nowhere, the everywhere WOMAN

I am the fat WOMAN

I am the loser WOMAN

I am the winner WOMAN

I am the hotsy-totsy WOMAN and
the not-so-fast-buster WOMAN

I am the woman-everyone-tries-to-impress WOMAN

I am the Helen-Get-Reddy WOMAN

I am the to-Hell-and-Back WOMAN
I am the foreign car WOMAN
I am the you-can't-get-parts-for WOMAN
I am the Leo WOMAN
I am the Gemini WOMAN
I am the Cancer WOMAN and the upset stomach WOMAN
I am the psoriasis WOMAN and the cirrosis-of-the-liver WOMAN
I am the Amazing Amazon WOMAN
I am the Nubile Nile WOMAN
I am the Messy Mississippi WOMAN
I am the Grand Canyon WOMAN
I am the you-can-take-a-mule-train-down-my-sides WOMAN
I am the you-can-fly-a-rocket-across-me WOMAN
and you-die-in-flames WOMAN
I am the freeway WOMAN
I am the anybody-going-my-way WOMAN
I am the straight-through-to-Detroit WOMAN
I am the Bingo-on-Sunday
and the Never-on-Sunday WOMAN
I am the one-hell-of-a-woman and
you'd-better-believe-it WOMAN
I am the I-didn't-come-all-this-way-to-
sit-on-my-ass-and-do-nothing WOMAN
I am the too-much WOMAN and the
I-ain't-a-bad-dancer WOMAN
I am the don't-anyone-call-me-sweetie WOMAN
I am the endless-poem WOMAN
I am the call-it-quits WOMAN
I am the out-of-breath WOMAN

I am the woman-who-just-
told-you-who-she-is WOMAN
Now, it's your turn, WOMAN
Speak up, WOMAN
Tell me something new, WOMAN
I ain't got all day, WOMAN

Someone stop me, WOMAN
Please help me, WOMAN

The end, WOMAN
The end, WOMAN
The end, WOMAN

THE END!! WOMAN!!

PERFIDIO VITUS

The Throat of Joy

My woman has great steaming tits, I love
to grab them into heaven of terrible death,

My woman has great American Divide slit,
stinking pit, I dive in with my heart torn in pieces,

When I am dying inside my woman, like an
angel in the middle of Satan's Hell Cunt,

I scream, "I AM LOVER!" and the flowers
of our mouths blossom into the crimson
of our love's anguish,

Anyone who would come to interrupt us
in love's despair, I would rip his balls apart
and eat his teeth for dinner,

Because she is rosy ass of dawn,
and I am chariot driver of mighty phallus,

She is wonderful moon goddess,
and I am her blazing sun and sexual master.

The Knife of Love

You rotten, stinking money lips,
you grubbing dog of death-shit,

My woman and I will not fuck for you pocketbook,
My woman and I will not kiss your sheckle ass,

There is no more love in your heart
than there is hair in Julie Andrew's nose,

My woman and I will be fucking on your
grave, when you are dead and rotting,
you scum-sucking father dollar sign,

We have annihilate you, you are
no longer welcome in our genitals,

My woman and I will be fucking forever,
despite that she is American blonde girl.

RAINBOW BENDERSTALK

Goodbye Warren

A bunny has blown up in a terrible accident,
as the fur of my heart flies in the explosion
of my love for you,

The room is hot as I tightly grasp
the remaining rabbit's foot of our love,
as you burst from the room,

All I see, as you leave,
is your hair against the door.

You Are One Knee, I Am the Other

Mother, it's not your fault I'm plump,
I loved your cooking, and Daddy wasn't home much,
so we would share a box of chocolate loneliness.

I'm not sorry I'm plump,
I like my thighs, they are my friends,

Like my thighs,
as long as we are together,
no one can tear us apart.

Ever Want

The wet corner lamp-post watches,
as lonely streetcars chase each other
to the bottomless ocean,

The eye of the grocery blinks,
as hungry mannekins pay the coins
of their tennis shoe tears
for empty bottle love,

And where are you, my heart,
on this thunderstorm night
of my gum-wrapper life?

Remember Want

Sad eyes across the cafe table,
you sip your coffee slowly,

I wonder what dreams you have,
little wonder-child of the city light,

If you would let me take you in my arms,
we could fly away to dream-like solace,

Oh, now, my fountain pen has leaked
all over your crumpled napkin smile,

On Tuesday, I must go to LA,
and there, be alone, again,

Maybe, I'll see you there,
Sad Eyes, and, then, could you laugh,
and say, "I was happy... I was... once."?

CRYSTAL LEAN HART

Hysteria Família

Stone glance	Diamond mirror	Crystal cinder	Steel blade
Silver moan	Frozen shaft	Spirit mold	Blood blade
Family dead	I	Did	It.

Convulsive Wound

I take
your heart
between
my teeth
and bite
down,

In the bedroom,
the walls
chew together
in the corners,

In the hallway,
old bread
digests
the floorboards,

I put your mouth
in an envelop
and mail it
to the dogcatcher,

The moon
sucks the life
from the manzanita,

One arm
of mine
attacks
a knife blade
in the kitchen
drawer,

My hands
smear
blood
on our
motionless
fuck.

LORNE MOONE

Ponderosa Pine

Dawn came on,
and I knew the dog,
Old Uncle Mize,
was restless,

I clung to my sleepless heart,
as he and I walked the seacoast rain,
with our own separate animal loss,

Your moist lips and tongue
were on the grass that we,
Old Uncle Mize and I,
journeyed damply,

When dusk came on,
I knew the soul of love,
in search of distant fields,
would find nothing
in its voice to sing,

Soon my wings
will spread far past
my buttoned sleeves,

I remember
sparse thickets
of emptiness,

You were
not there
in Vancouver,
now I am alone
at Point Reyes,

Since you've flown, I will,
like my Ponderosa neighbors,
stand tall, and won't want to fall,
and be swept to the sea,

Even so, I could,
like Old Uncle Mize,
run across miles
of September frost
to the embrace
of your sweltering,
forbidden arms.

KARL ENGELS

(Hey, man, like before I read, I got to say there's more heavy shit coming down on our brothers and sisters in the slam and on the outside, and it's up to you and me to do something about it, so let's get off our collective ass and organize some heavy retaliation action. All right... that's that...now, this is this...)

Charlie Parker Blew Cool

Charlie Parker blew cool,
Charlie Parker blew cool,
Charlie Parker blew cool,

Until the cool
blew Charlie Parker
away.

I Am White and That Ain't Right

I am White, and that ain't right,
cuz you ain't free, because of me,
and that is why I say, to all my
White brothers and sisters,

Get down with your Black brothers and sisters,
and your Chicano brothers and sisters,

and your Indian brothers and sisters,
and your Gay brothers and sisters,
and your incarcerated brothers and sisters,
and your junkie brothers and sisters,
and your low-life, White scum brothers and sisters.

We are all in the same jail, man,
we are all in the slam, man,
we are all under the thumb of the screws,
we are all in exile from the capitalist,
peanut butter, Hostess Twinkie,
slum warlords, man,

And so I say,

Get down with all the wiped-out brothers
and sisters of all races and classes,

Get down with the Third World, totally
ignored, pissed-off brothers and sisters,

Get down UNDER the hob-nail boot,
bite the heel that stomps all the downtrodden,
wonderful, loving, caring human souls,
and that includes you, brothers and sisters,
because I know that includes me, man,
and we better get our shit together,
before they wipe us off the face of the map!

DEATH TO THE FACIST COCKROACH THAT
PREYS UPON THE APARTMENTS OF THE SOUL!

Organize! Get right with God!

It is a far, far better thing I do
than I have ever done before, man.

All right! All right!
That's it. That's it!
As if that ain't enough!

LARS TORVALD SKOGLUND

Winter Snow

I was driving my Volvo,
when a wolf screamed,

Jesu Kristus! I screamed,

The blueberries were beneath
a blanket of Winter snow,

At home, Inge told me
Grandfather Nels
had succumbed
to throat cancer,

Meaninglessly,
we prayed,

In the sauna,
Inge screamed.

Spring Rain

Auntie Hilda
locked herself

in the smoke house
for seven bitter weeks,

Uncle Sven
locked himself
in the hothouse
for seven bitter weeks,

Cousin Linus
took the Baltic ferry
and never returned,

The blueberries poked
through the April snow,

Pastor Lundberg
shot himself
in the rectory,

While the children
chased the Easter goose,

In a dream,
the night hawk screamed,

I ran my Volvo
into a tree.

BLUTO ZARN

The Non of Non

(Bluto Zarn's
NONbook
of NONpoems
and NONdrawings
is NONTitled,
NONpublished,
and NONavailable.

Bluto Zarn
NONappeared
and NONperformed
his NONworks.)

RICHARD BUILDS HIS HOUSE ON A FLAT PLACE JOHNSON

The Tale of the Coyote

The Coyote was hunting in the Arroyo, when he saw a Spirit. The Spirit told the Coyote to avenge the death of the Wolf. "How can I do this?" the Coyote asked the Spirit. The Spirit laughed, "You must know this in yourself."

Then, the Spirit was gone from the eyes of the Coyote. The Coyote returned to his burrow and pondered his task. "I will go to the wife of the Wolf, and I will ask her," said the Coyote.

When the Coyote came to the wife of the Wolf, he saw that she was with the Wolf's brother, the Dog. The Dog said to the Coyote, "I see that you have come to avenge the death of the Wolf." "Yes," said the Coyote.

Then, the Spirit appeared to the Coyote and struck his heart so that there was no strength in him. The Dog attacked the Coyote at the throat, and the Coyote's life drained from him.

The Wise Ones tell us that when the Spirit appeared to the Coyote in the arroyo, the Coyote did not notice the guile in his eyes.

The Wise Ones tell us the Coyote was brave in his heart but gullible in the arroyo.

The Tale of the Carp

The Carp lived by a rock in the deepest part of the Lake, and he was content, and he lived happily in the Lake.

One day, his Son and his Daughter came to him and said, "Father, we have heard stories of the Mighty River and the Great Ocean."

The Carp answered, "Yes, my children, I too have heard the stories of the Mighty River and the Great Ocean."

The Son spoke, "Father, have you never wanted to go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean?"

"Yes, my Son," said the Father, "I have often dreamed of such a journey, but I am old now, and I no longer wish to go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean."

The Daughter spoke, "Father, we wish to go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean."

The Father answered, "My children, you have great dreams, but it is a terrible journey, and you might never return. The Lake is a fine and beautiful place to live. You might never see your home again, if you go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean."

Both children answered, "What you say is wise and true, but, in our hearts, we know we must go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean."

The Son and the Daughter left their beloved Father and swam into the Mighty River, and the Mighty River carried them away, on their journey to the Great Ocean.

The Carp was in great sorrow to see his children leave the Lake, for the Carp knew in his heart that he would never see his Son and Daughter again.

The Wise Ones tell us that those who go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean will find themselves in the belly of the Great Shark or the Mighty Barracuda.

The Wise Ones tell us that those who stay in the Lake and do not go down the Mighty River and swim in the Great Ocean will find themselves in the belly of the Wily Angler or the Crafty Fisherman.

Blue Morning

It was Tuesday morning.
I got the paper.
There were the usual headlines.
Marla was still in bed.
Her big toes pushed back the sheets.
She groaned.
I supposed it was a dream.

Andrew called.
There was a party.
I told Andrew we might come,
but probably not.
I struck the mold on my latest work
and fixed a cappuccino.
Vito called and told me the news.
Carlos and Gena were splitting up.
He said there was a party.

I called to Marla,
but she was asleep.
I thought it was probably the ludes.
I told Vito we might make the party.
On the other hand, we might stay in,
for a change.

Marla got up and fixed some eggs.
I told her about Carlos and Gena.
She wasn't surprised.

Red Letter Day

It was Friday.
It was raining like all get out.
We thought the cat was pregnant.
Marla went down for lox and bagels.
Eventually, we were going to have to
do something about the cat.
A car squealed on the street,
turning the corner.

At the party,
the night before,
Angela told everyone she was pregnant.
No one wanted to confront Michael.
Robinson was on Tom Snyder.
He wore the white suit.
Del flew in from Montreal.
A red letter came from Con Ed.
Pay or else.

We went out for Chinese.
Marla ordered the duck.

SARA ANN RAPP

Love is a Four Letter Word

I have not talked
to a man in seven years.

They disgust me,
with their little pink eyes.
They drip and drool.
They wander in museums
looking for innocent girls
with their sticky fingers
in their greasy pockets.

I have not talked
to a man in seven years.

My son is the only man
I have spoken to
in seven years.

I've told him
of the black snake,
and the endless rape,
and the lustful heart,
and the putrid creature
he's been forced to be.

In time, he will come
to despise, with love,
the men I've not let
touch me in seven years.

Beyond Supremacy

Reuben, Reuben,
I've been thinking
what a grand world
this would be,

If the men
were all transported
far beyond the Northern Sea,

To Last Land and Finish Land
and North Gonorhea.

Rachel, Rachel, I've been thinking,
what a grand world this would be,

If the women were all transported
far beyond their Normalcy,

Beyond Gramercy, beyond Skenectedy,
beyond Ecstasy, to Supremacy and beyond.

CHARLES DRUNKOWSKI

Mongo Eddie's Dead Cat

I was puking my guts out in the alley behind the Fickle Finger, when Fat Dolores says to me, "Hey, Blue Balls, where's your manners? Ladies first," and she proceeds to rip off her panties and piss on Mongo Eddie's dead cat. Goddam, she made a royal mess.

That cat could fuck the brains out of fifty wet pussies before you could say, "Suck my wang." Then, one day, Mongo Eddie, sloshed on a case of Thunderbird, tossed the pussy off the ninth story, with a cement block tied to its neck. The cat hit the pavement, nose first, and proceeded to climb back up through its bleeding asshole.

When Mongo Eddie finally came to, he was human remorse personified. He came into the Fickle Finger screaming his ugly face off. He grabbed Fat Dolores by the tits and yelled it was her miserable fault. Ya see, Fat Dolores had jilted Mongo Eddie for seven sailors from the USS Enterprise, and Mongo Eddie was pickled for a month.

Fat Dolores told Mongo Eddie to shove his remorse up his bunghole, and she went out in the alley and pissed on the cat.

The cat's name was Rubber Dick, and I guess Fat Dolores gave him a good send-off. "Go to fucking hell," she yelled at Mongo Eddie, as she planted her ass on Rubber Dick's mangled carcass. What a way to go.

I went back in the Fickle Finger and ordered up a pint to toast old Rubber Dick. We all sucked a few for Rubber Dick, and then we forgot about it.

poem for chaz

lover of my life
take my body
take my soul
take my breast
between your
sinewy hands

the sensual pleasure
that i feel when you
gently bite my swollen clit
the tender pain you soothe
with your wet mouth

when we are
eating each other out
what dreams i have
of our eternal bliss
cascading streams
of mountain rain
the heavenly strain
of your redwood cock
the quaking of our
earthly bed

no one said
when i was young
how you would come
to my dewy flesh
and destroy my mind
with your steely rod

eve of desolation

in cleveland town
they are building
parking lots and highrises
on the land where once
the indians danced

on sunday
granny-mommo
baked a cake for us
and we would sing the hymns
of our dying gods

when i split
with my friends
for the coast
i never told my father
of the pain that
he had caused

of all the people
who have jumped off
the golden gate bridge
two of them
were friends of mine

when i am doing
some exotic drug
i have dreamt america
torn apart at the seams

god, la is an ugly city
and someday we will tear
the factories to the ground
and we will all make love
in the steaming jungle
that will grow
on its forgotten face

LANCE BRUCE RODMAN

○ Lips

○ lips,

○ secret lips,

○ stolen lips,

○ smiling, biting, purple lips,

○ red, curling, mumbling lips,

○ vowel lips,

○ consonant lips,

○ diphthong lips

○ Mayan, ○ Tunisian,

○ Taiwanese lips,

○ Summer lips,

○ lips of Winter,

○ lips of all seasons,

○ yearning, supplicant lips,

○ vengeful, conclusive lips,

○ lips, dripping with want,

○ lips, give me a kiss,

○ lips, my lips,

○ lips, my lips.

Swan Song for Oliver

If you think you can waltz in here at 1 AM,
after I've had a terrible day at the office,
and expect me to pick up the dance,
you're sorely mistaken,

Mister Cowboy, Mister Captain America,
Mister Jolly Saint Dickolas,

If you think this empty bottle of vodka
is just an accident, and if you think I'm
waiting up for you just because I'm upset,
you've got another think coming,

Mister Wonderful, Mister Fantastic, in your
Guccis and Puccis and your rhinestone Levis.

I've been around this block before,
Mister Magic Fingers, I know your touch.

There are other fish in the sea,
and I just might go get me a pole.

So, get on out of here, with your
silver tongue and your silver slippers,
and never show your face around here,
again, Mister Johnny Come Too Lately.

I've been downing screwdrivers all night,
waiting for you, and this is the end,
I've got no more time for you,
Mister Missed Opportunity,
Mister Once Upon a Time,

You lit a fire in my heart, but I've laid
a wet blanket on my love for you,

Go find yourself another Raunchy Munchy,
Mister Big Mac, Mister Quarter Pounder,

Old MacDonald had a farm,
but I'm going to the city.
I'm going downtown, and if
there's a fire downtown,
I'm going to jump into it.

You aren't the only flame in town,
Mister Bright Lights and City Nights,
Mister Close Cover Before Striking,
and I'm no longer your moth,
I don't long for you, anymore.

I got long without you,
before I met you,
I'm gonna get long
without you, now!

HUGH BLATHER-PRATTLE

The Always Me

Everyone is himself.
He can be no one else.

You are the one
you were always intended to be.
You always know what you must know,
if you listen to the truth
that is speaking inside of you.

Today is now.
Yesterday is forever lost.
Tomorrow is the wish of becoming
you will never know.

Touch your life,
as you alone must feel.

I am not you,
you are not me,
but we are both real.

We are unique is the we of we.
Each of us is the one of us,
and all together,
we touch the whole of us.

We are not all,
and yet, all together,
we are us all.

Alone,
we are alone,
and thus:

If you want to be,
if you want to do,
if you alone know,
as you must know,
the truth that is true,
for the one of us,
and the many of us,

You must be the me
that we all need to be
to be the greater we
of the we that is the
ALWAYS ME.

Never Sing in the Rain in Palo Alto

I go down to my ex-wife's house.
Tom T. Hall is on the radio,
singing about little ducks.
My ex-wife is in the bedroom
"Is she naked?" I wonder.
My erection rises and subsides.

The children play in the yard.
What are the children doing?
What are we doing, the adults?

Smoking Winstons and drinking Marsala.
My mother said, "Do one thing, boys,
don't take up smoking."

I sit by the clear glass window,
I read the note the neighbor wrote me,
"Come by and see me. Do you drink beer?"
On the radio, Ed McMahan is selling Budweiser.

I turn to the picture my son drew. "Son,"
I tell him, "Never trim your nails in your
ex-wife's house." On the radio, Willie
Nelson's blue eyes are crying in the rain.

I ask myself, "Is she naked?
Will I always be alone?
Will I ever be famous?"

Coming home, everyone I ask,
on the El Camino Real,
speaks no English.

The Magic Woman Shows Up on Carl Street

Suddenly, the magic woman
was living on our block.
I saw her, only a glimpse really,
standing beside the chiffonier.

Back at the apartment, Brian says
to me, "Butter some toast, Steve,
she's not really there."

"I saw her," I say, "She disappeared
behind the Frigidaire."

Brian goes out for another gallon
of burgundy. When he gets back,
I ask him, "Brian, were there
magic women in Mexico, too?"

“Steve,” he says, “She’ll
be in Detroit by Tuesday.”

I looked up, through
the bamboo curtain,
and I saw her, for a moment,
sitting down on a steamer trunk.

Brian tells me to do
like him, make a collage.

I get on the phone, and I call
out to a big-breasted friend,

I go into my expectations
like others go into a sauna,

It’s warm,
but no one lives there.

Back home in Moline,
no one understands
a disturbed man.