



Joefiles 125:

simmeringly sloppy suburban surmises

another one for the old man

as i
sit in this
chair
thinking
about
my
dad who has been
gone almost a year now,
i realize
that he spent most of his
life in a chair.

sleeping,
eating,
dreaming,
TV watching,
talking,
everything
of substance
i can remember he did in
a chair.

he slept on a chair
the first 14 years of his life
while his folks and sister
dreamed in comfortable intimacy
in their own beds.

the last 10 years of his life was
primarily spent in his chair
to carry on what he did the
first part of his short life.

and i think that
it's not so bad that he
returned to what
he was most comfortable with.

who needs a damned bed when you have a chair?

and that's where
his story stands
as i sit here in my
soft,

deep,
dark
blue
chair of
now.

at night,

i love looking over the peach
leaves of our tiny front yard tree
as the boys run around with
their wiffle balls and errant truck toys
as my wife emits thousands of
tiny sun drenched dots
towards her mother's day plants
assorted around the porch and
front deck
and as the thousands of sparkled
dots land on her beloved plants,
i think about her love doing the same
thing to me and the boys
as her metaphoric watering is
mimicked all over the place
like a hundred fire hydrants
making the world wet,
loved
and
worthy.

bob dylanish surmise

i guess
i always thought
that my dad was
going to outlive
bob dylan
and as the
new dylan album
ratchets through
the room
with my quickly moving
4-year old fixated on
opening a small plastic bag
i realized that the only
thing certain about this life
is that the music will never
die as the obituary notices
in the sunday paper
hold steady with their numbers of
souls that graced this earth
in their own raucous
tambourine man ways.

fading father words

i wonder when the day
is going to come
that i'm going to lose
footing on when my dad
was around when i used to listen
to something or wear something when he
was still alive.

and as that song
fades away into
a bird careening over the
calm summer sky,
i feel that there is always going
to be something that i will
force myself to accept
about my father's relativity
in my own life ..

so,
as i continue to expand like
the aftermath of the big bang,
my father remains that collapsing sun
in some yonder orbit i
only see
in distant satellite pictures
depicting
depths of space
my
brain has a hard
time
fully
encompassing.

glenn beck

reminds me of that
retired clown that
got the call for
one last 'retirement gig'
at a school for blind kids
and just before
he goes up in his
sad clown get-up,
he reaches into his pants
behind the curtain to
grab that sweaty itch
as a picture of
george w. bush loses
it's taping and comes
zig zagging to the ground
as the curtain rises,
beck smells his finger
as a tiny girl in the back
sneezes loud and the crowd
awaits his first
clown act.

I am a salt convert

as a kid,
i used to reign in
sweets
as though it was
the only reason i was birthed.

pancakes,
cereal,
gum,
ice cream,
hard candy,
cinnamon rolls,
waffles,
donuts,
straight sugar.

and somewhere in my
early 20's i have lost the
urge.

here and there i'll
do a chocolate bar
or some ice cream,
but i finally fell off the
wagon and i have no
true definitive reason as to why.

perhaps i'm shunning away
those ugly parts of childhood,
or perhaps i saw my dad enter
an early grave because he couldn't
keep his sweet urges to safe minimums,
or perhaps because one of my most traumatic
childhood memories was a bad dental visit
that sprung more blood and tears than rocky
in the second movie.

and if it's not just one of those,
it's something similar as the kids in my
home can rest easier knowing that their
nosy, hungry old man won't be making off
with the sugary sweetness they wait
in sheer patience to rip and roar through

as though our home is a battleground for
culinary competitions.

i love nature's relentless voracity

with
the organic design
color
and grace of the
dandelion.

from the vibrant fields of
yellow,
to the kid loved spokes on a
wilted dandy
that gets hustled into the wind
to germinate more,
all the way to the
rainy days when they fold up their faces
like umbrellas covering the yellow
and making you believe for one
brief notion that all the weeds are
gone
in
a
flush,
eternal field of
newly
strewn green.

i think

i'm going
to retire
the bad craft
i have picked up
as being a bad
gift giver
to my wife.

it's actually
quite surprising.

i used to be good at
it,
but
this last mother's day
compounded the
disarray of my
lack of talent.

i got her a bunch of
flowers,
that should have been impatience,
but they were tulip kind of flowers
that don't survive well in the roar of
summer sun.

and i got her a mug
that my boy scrawled
'i love mom'
that was ruined after one washing
when the waters seeped inside.

then,
i had my other boy pen a design
on a plate with permanent marker
that later got fried in the
washing machine.

it happens time after
time.

the intentions are polished
like a genie with 3 savory wishes,
but it usually melts and seethes

like butter on a hot sidewalk.

so,
i'm retiring my tired,
bad ways
for
shiny,
new,
colorful,
lasting,
momentous,

simple
gifts
that
can
deliver
me
from
the
cellar
i walk
to
climb out
of
with
a
big
fucking
red bow on
my
new
head.

Maria has left the building.

fuck.

christ,

she was only 40.

maria showed me
new york city in fashion,
introduced me to bukowski,
parlayed interesting stories of
heroin and cocaine in NYC 80's,
jukes full of joan jett,
sushi in greenwich village,
all the smokes on the top of the
london double decker,
and the piano in the basement apartment
she held in her parents home.

i remember every talk,
all the exchange of poems and
the musing of where god is hiding and
how everything was going to end up.

then,
several sundays back the music faded.

my brother said that maria
mimicked her hero,
elvis,
and indeed left the building
for the final fucking time.

and as the shock of her early
dismissal sinks in,
i hear the distant din of
our family's once distant relative,
billy joel,
crooning that only the good
die young.

and it's then that the
notion and reality of
the best leaving early,
sets in a new sting

that i'll never get a shine
from her coolness again.

maria is gone.

fuck.

christ.

mere fractions

the
first
half
of
your
1/8th
can't
touch
the
2nd
half
of
my
2nd
9th.

miles in miles and miles over miles

the
lurching,
monstrous,
unrefined,
penetrating
beauty of
my
highly
energized
4-year old
miles
boy
with
his
extra long
arm
on
the
15th
chromosome
is
one
of
the
best
things
i
have
and
will
ever
witness
in
this
very
short
life
we
get
to
lead.

neighbor mystery

there are these
two plastic,
rubbery shoe looking things
that have been on the
neighbors
rusty shed for
well over a year
and each time my wife
and i see it we ask
each other what it is
and repeat the same
process of stupidity
and try to theorize as to what it is.

each time,
i tell myself that i will look
when i 'm closer down in the yard
and always get derailed by the
kids,
the grass,
the peaches,
the apples,
the mist,
the bugs,
the weeds,
the porch,
my wife,
the clouds
or a bird.

and then,
i sit here at this
sunday afternoon
window
again wondering what
the hell
those kids next door
threw on that
shed top
and did it in
such a way that
it's a permanent
haze of

TV noise rattling and
clinking in
our
small,
neighborhood
mystery.

NO-STOP-DON'T

when my 11-year old boy
zen has his niece or pals
over for some
fun running around the house,
i begin to hear the 'NO-STOP-DON'T' doo wop bop
begin as my 4-year old miles
runs around trying to get their attention ..

then,
my wife and i have to jog in with our
own blend of redirecting and calming
as the NO-STOP-DON'T' doo wop bop
begins in full charge like a spring field of
fresh dandelions and the process begins anew.

over and over
and over and over
and over
until i actually cannot hear
the words NO-STOP-DON'T'
from another human
for at least an hour or so ..

so,
i'm going to work on my newest
doo wop bop masterpiece for
the family and world to
grab like a lost hug from a dead relative ..

it will go a bit like this ..

'YES-GO-MORE .. '

one day

a

while

back

when

gas

was

over

4

bucks

a

gallon

i

noticed

that

gas

backwards

is

sag

and

it

finally

soaked

in

how

draining

the

driving

process

can

be.

one long unintentional line

my eye
ball
followed a
long trickle
of
erratic,
yet ordered line
of black liquid
that
was
oozing from the
back of
some car
that
went on and on
for
miles
down the road
as
i
wondered what
kind
of
path
we
all
have a tendency
of
lying down
when
someone
takes
notice
and
wonders
what
and how
your
drip
did
the
things
that

it
did.

one things

the peril
of living through everything
we have to live through
on a daily basis is that
there is always
one beautiful thing
that can bring me back
to orbit ..

whether
the wife,
the child,
the other child,
the collective,
the coffee mug,
the corned beef,
the new idea,
the lost memory,
the last person in line,
the dog head out the window on the highway,
the way the sun blinds a bit,
the curve of a tasty apple,
the bend of my wife's kiss,
the thought of tomorrow
and every fucking thing
that happened
in each
and every
on
of
my
personal
yesterdays.

our old friend tom

has run out of pot
and i can always tell
when he
comes by to
drop off my boy
and brings his step son
into the house.

today,
i had a stack of
old wood sections of
fence he wanted to haul
to make a tiny makeshift
fence in his own back yard.

as he asked with wild
eyes for a circular saw,
i click my fingers and
said come this way ..

after i got the saw plugged
in and the wood in the
front,
he cleared the fast food bags
and empty beer bottles
from the van floor
to welcome in his
new
lug of wood.

as he poured with
sweat containing the
booze from the night before,
he began to saw into the wood
in wild torrents of white/gray smoke
because of the dullness of the blade.

as the wood bowed,
he chagrined a bit,
but plowed forth in
that patent tom manner
because he was going to
win in the end.

and as the last lug of

wood was tossed into his
truck,
he teetered unsteady in the
new, hot sun
to tell me about the
evening's tale
the night before.

something about a dude
he was drinking with that
recently had a heart attack
and involuntarily starts to twitch around
midnight cause his body has
caught up to him.

with a sports shake of the hand
and a good work quote,
tom was gone in his blazing
ensemble of green van,
fumes of old booze
and the dreams
that some
day mary jane will
visit him once again
with fresh musk
and
a refrigerator full
of fresh dreams.

our pink cat

might be
the most confused
animal i will ever own.

his name now
is 'pinkie' and he
responds to that
and another
name,
'petchu'.

but,
my wife and i decided
to change the cat's
name because he's
a male cat that has
all the makings of looking
pink and acting rather metrosexual
in all his mannerisms.

and,
the russian name he had
was a throw back to an
evil, violent ukrainian bastard
she was once married to.

so,
to rid the memory of the past
and forge our own,
we had given pinkie a new beginning
and with 9 lives on the
docket i'm
certain that he's the perfect creature
to have a fortunate reversal
of fortune ..

our terrified orange cat

tip toes around our
home as the loud pangs of
our 4-year old miles,
along with
me,
the wife
and 11-year old
trying to negate a
barter plan.

the whole while,
the cat tries to sleep off
the previous nocturnal night
with ears bent like beef jerky
in a new plastic bag.

other times,
he tepidly ambles over
the gray carpeting as though
the sky may finally fall
and all the birds of yesterday
are going to swoop in
and make is worst dreams
come true.

then,
our miles boy will
melt into a rare fit
which always brings the
cat to his side.

alas,
this is always
the worst sort of
approach the cat makes
in his death wish marches.

he usually gets
kicked,
grabbed or swatted at
as miles enters the 5th gear of a
thermonuclear melt down.

the whole while,
our cat feels that need

to comfort the trauma
as he licks his lumps and
goes in for round 2
just before i save his
cat soul and usher him into another
quadrant of the home ..

all the while,
the wisps of his hair
swirl around the room
in a harried symphony
of insanity to get lodged
onto my tongue
and take my mind away
from baby
and feline
motives.

quitter

i've never
had the courage to
be a quitter
because
i know that
my karmic
guilt may pop my
tire at an odd time
or
swallow my memory
away from my
salivating synapses
forever leaving
me dumber than
i already have achieved.

so,
i keep dawdling on
the best i know because
i like everything to
be hard in this life of
mine.

wouldn't know which
corner to retreat to if
i decided that all
these words
and actions had to cease
and i became
a part of the silent
majority
driving
to wal-mart
or
taking a golden
leak in some
errant
johnny on
the fucking spot.

refrigerator mystery

the football
coach
for
the
local high school
in the district
i work
sent a mass email
the other day
to
everyone
that he was looking for
a
refrigerator
that
grew legs and
waltzed
out of his office area.

my first
thought was that
his newly signed NFL quarterback
son
likely took it
as he polished up his
millionaire ways by
becoming a
learned cheapskate.

and my notion
was further clouded in doubt
the following day
when he said they
found his refrigerator.

with many questions
unanswered,
i wondered if
this coach considered
the notion to call his kid
and just have him order
the biggest,
fanciest fucking refrigerator
for all the meals

his old
man
gave
him
over
the
years.

sad condom guy

my 4-year old
miles son
just started watching
TV about a year ago
and one of his favorite shows
is an odd sprig in the TV lineup
called yo gabba gabba.

it's a land of colorful,
odd characters in fictional lands
being run by a wiry DJ in an
orange felt hat and a yellow robotic
character.

and with all these main characters,
there are a host of other ones that peek
in every now and then.

one of those odd characters
is a condom looking thing that
always walks around with sad,
tragic downturned black eyes and red mouth
as he sprouts fake, graphic created tears.

he usually only lasts about 5 to 10 seconds,
but the whole time his sad condom body
flits around in a depressing fit of tears.

each time i try to peel back the methodology
of the creators to make such
a crazy creation in a kids show.

then,
i realize that this sad condom guy
is likely sad cause his rubber tip broke
an he impregnated the world with his
proverbial child which is that
tiny window within us all that feels
the pain
and cries those big,
fancy TV made
tears.

sometimes i'm sure

there is something in the air
that is making my
4-year old miles boy
rip roar around
without listening to anyone but
his own impulses.

he's been diagnosed with
an impulse disorder,
yet we work
as hard as
we are allotted
to tame his tempest.

but,
when that barometric pressure,
and humidity,
and wind,
and heat,
and sun
and
other invisible particles
collate into the outside airs,
i believe it minces with his sensory integration issues
and that damned extra arm on the 15th chromosome
to send him lurching into a space
we can only pretend to understand
as he ignores yet another statement
and begins
scrawling his own all over
every inch
of
our
tired,
kid addled
bones.

the best way
that i have
made my version
of jesus
real is
to make light
of things
when i have
the change
to flip that coin.

recently,
a serious story
came on the news
about a dude in texas
that found a cheet-o that looked
like jesus.

they called it chesus.

the dude put it in a
pretty plastic display casing
and has used it to publicize his
church and
collectively increase
the
masses to
chesus.

and with this,
i had to wonder if
this guy would keep looking
in rapt attention in all the future
bags of crunchy chips to
see if he might run across mother mary,
mary magdelane,
jesus' favorite donkey
or any other
cheesy coating
participles
of gods
many truisms.

the brand new world

lies just outside
of my aching feet
as the sounds of neighbor kids
cry into the sun drenched
pre-june sky
as the love dove sits
on the swing set
wondering where
its pair went off to
as the smell of love
wafts off the
newly sprouting peach
tree waiting
to bulge,
and toss a tiny
film of hairs
all over
this
saturday mug.

the bright hot light of today,

i'm glad i cannot hear
the neighbor man
chide his kids
for being
kids.

he's only outside with these
tikes if he has to dole out
his nasty hash of verbal discipline.

and on this air conditioned day by
the window,
i look out at his hairy shoulders and
volumous belly
feeling how good it is that
i can't actually hear what
he's pelting the kids about this time.

and quickly,
the yard is empty and the
last trace of the door begins
it's descent as the dad
gets what he wants
as the
kids
urge onto another tempest
to
save
their
sagging,
raging
childhood memories.

THE EVALUATION OF TRUE QUANTITY AND QUALITY

when i think about
the veracity
and volumes
at which i produce
and consume
in this existence,
i think about the
final recording my
father left behind saying
that i almost killed
my mom in labor.

she had to last for hours
and lost a
huge quantity of blood
to bring me into this world.

and as he talked about
that dark time in his life when
he almost lost his wife
and graced his third child on
this planet,
i had to stop the tape and pause
in a bubble
of muted silence
and just
watch
the rest of the world
move
and hustle as fast as they could.

i just couldn't form
the words to
understand the
circumstance
that brought me into this world ..

still can't.

i just sit a bit
more quiet,
and introspective
as i ponder the magnitude

of
our collective
lives
as the
sound
of
silence
appears to be quite
odd.

the goose family

down
the way is
flourishing in
ways i have never
seen in
many human
families i have
encountered
over this youngling
life of mine.

from the erect
mom and dad goose,
the 7 tiny goslings
waddled their tiny bodies around
weeks back looking for food
and pooping as
a goose should.

just yesterday,
i saw this flock of goslings
all grown up and
got a lump in my throat
as i wondered
when i should send their
family the christmas card
i feel i need to pen ..

all this,
as the geese grow before my
eyes
and doodle on an invisible
map of spots they want to vacation
when they finally leave this town in
the cold winter
just missing my
arriving christmas card
and tough guy song ..

the insurance commercial girl

every time
the insurance commercial
comes on with the woman
in dark hair,
bright lipstick,
pony tail waving,
starch white clothes,
clean white room,
my wife silently fumes
at this woman.

she's just one of those
souls my wife has to see
traipsed over the TV screen
all the time
and she can't stand the woman.

this only peaks my intrigue
as i linger on the station
telling her that her favorite commercial is on.

at this point,
she's immune to the commercial spot
as i keep it on,
peer closer,
listen to this actor's words
and actions hoping that
i may actually get while she
gets so disgusted at this
rather benign gal saving
folks hundreds on car insurance.

then,
i dismiss the notion entirely because
there just doesn't have to
be a good reason to feel such disdain
for someone we don't know.

it's the nature of TV.

it's the commercial insanity that won't end.

it's a cruel, cruel world
full of

commercials,
baby.

THE NEWNESS

standing outside
of my son's karate
practice the other night
talking to one of his instructors
that just had a baby she
was rocking in her arms
i was talking about how
everything changes
and all is
new
with
different sounds,
new tastes,
brand new colors,
rare sensations
and the absolute twist in
your martini ...

it was a talk
i can have very rarely
with my lot of single friends
angling to see a new show
or taste another unfound quadrant of earth
and i love all them bastards for their
zest in living conquest ..

but,
it's those moments with new parents
that are chalked up as some of my finest
because the best moment of my
life besides that first walk with
my wife in the AM dark
was watching my son Miles
fly into this world a click
before 5
to
start re-arranging everything
i once held as an absolute
truth.

it was the day
that was to begin
my mad scramble across the darkened room
to find the light switch

as he calmly calls my
name,
'daddy'
and i
feel
whole once
again.

the thing about getting older

is that i have known
a handful of folks that
have become famous.

and when i hear reports
of them or see them on tv
or hear them on the radio,
i pause and see what the hell
they are up to as
though i used to when we were
friends and i was in
the same 'common individual' bone
they were in.

one such old friend is
a missouri politician by the name of
trent skaggs.

he's a feisty type of politician
that doesn't take any shit.

he was more of a docile type
when i knew him,
and his new personality traits
are proof positive that politics
does what it promises.

so,
the other morning i heard
a brief interview snippet with
t. skaggs and he closed his
quote with the word 'remonstrative'.

and i thought that was
a fucking great reason to
urge reasons in opposition
as i clicked the radio off
and
realized that
his quote would stand as
the finest of any big
shot
i
was ever going to know.

thievery

i always
dig the
saying
"thick as thieves"
when it is uttered
because
it seems to me such a
silly utterance to
make ..

not only have
i never rarely met
a thick thief,
i never see
large thieves depicted
in movies
or
TV ..

but the thought of
a bunch of
bumbler bees
in thief gear
gathering into
a big
thick,
fictional pack
like a rabid
spoke of bees
ready to
come down
and
spell
a new
saying for
thievery
in the clear,
gold sky
all
clad in black letters
whipping
and whizzing
with their
tiny metaphor

of
bug wings.

weather color blobs

every time i
see those big
swirling amoebas of
weather patters on those
tornadic heavy weather
nights on local TV,
i scrunch to figure out what
the reds,
oranges,
greens and blues are supposed to mean
on their tiny,
secretive legends depicting
what the color globs are going to
do when they settle over our
doomed quadrant of ground.

and then,
i start to realize what it would
be like to get zonked out on LSD and
watch the weather as all the weathermen
walk calmly back and fro into
their well protected bunkers just a whizzing
on about what could happen to us
when the erratic color explosions
wait to sucker punch us
in both the funny bone
and lower chin.

what i realize late at night

is that
i love
being in love
with my
wife
and
that
my kids
will only
have one
smile filled
childhood
to
rip
and
roar
full of
dreams
as the
dark of night
becomes my own
delightful mix of
light i sip
down with
my
cold
orange
whiskey.

when i catch a mighty hawk

or determined vulture
in the high skies darting around
like a loopy 747 out of control
while a handful of birds
swoop and peck away,
i realize that the big bird
is always going to win
and that those small winged birds
better have a good head start once
they all stop for a break or
when the wind stops shouting so loudly
with the vigor and beauty
of a darwin quote recanted
by a small kid in the lands
holding us all together below.