



## **Joefiles LXIX**

Crack heads  
on  
a  
food stamp  
budget



## workin' one at home

writin' where  
the typing left  
off

as  
the kids wish for another fight  
they have no idea why they are fighting ..

sketchin' on the doodle pad  
for not having a brush and  
a  
palette of paint  
as  
the people interview for jobs  
that are way below their pay level  
because  
we  
are still recoverin' from a nasty recession

that the bad guys  
planned  
and

carried out  
in  
the  
invisible ringing bell  
above

some towers that used to stand off the harbor in New York ..

people still washin' clothes,  
cookin' brisket,  
taking the dog to shit down the block,  
filling the oil pan to the hilt  
and  
trimmin' the hedges  
for

all  
the  
new foliage a hopeful country

wants to look at again ..

## word rapping in time

oh,  
it's gonna  
be

a  
matter  
of  
time ..

time  
before  
the  
moon  
comes up behind your back  
and  
trims  
your

hair

and  
loosens your shoelaces ..

a matter  
of

time  
until  
the  
car  
goes off the track  
and  
comes straight for your  
wallet  
and

comes away with the remaining bites  
of  
dignity

you  
have

been hiding  
in  
her  
warm

spot ..

just

a  
matter of time  
until  
your

limp becomes  
a  
kick in your step  
and  
overtakes  
the  
small horse

looking to  
grab

the  
finish line

and  
eat

all

the sugar left in  
town ..

## **woman perched naked**

over the

3AM window sill yelling from the new place for the boys

to

shut the fuck up with their

honkin' over and over

as

I wait for them to

see my naked cock

&

want to really kick my

ass

real

good ..

**wishing away the used cloth  
shoes  
&  
such**

throwin' away holed-up socks  
and  
tan/yellow soiled  
undershirts  
as  
I get ready to move  
into another abode  
somewhere here in the inner part of the city ..

sure,  
trash bags full of  
used  
cloth and  
belts that long ago gave up on keeping me up ..

then,  
there are the clown masks I keep around,  
the old ball glove,  
the paper's from Europe  
and a coin  
in case

the gum looks  
sweeter than a solid lemon ..

sure,  
you have to give  
it  
away sometimes

to realize  
why it came to you in  
the  
first place ..

&  
if it doesn't hit you when you give it away  
it  
will  
in

the back of your  
mind

when you're having a mid-evening nap

to  
the background  
sounds

of  
a  
piano's players opus ..

*who remembered to let the dog out?*

rock  
tempo  
lock  
limbo  
some  
sun  
in  
the gun  
of  
a  
good run,  
the guys climb out of the white caprice classic,  
flip the beep - beep  
alarm

and  
go towards the Montclair  
to  
see how  
the  
gals are doing ..

rick  
rack  
on  
the  
back  
of  
a  
stack

as  
the  
burgers  
out flip the flapjacks  
and

all the people  
in  
the  
waiting room clamor to talk  
about

how  
the  
weather is doing  
or  
whether

there's

even  
weather  
to  
talk

about at all ..

## tonight july

all out of cold beers in  
the  
place,  
my scab has healed over,  
smoking almost snuffed out cigarettes,  
my lover is somewhere in the city  
or dreaming of the Pentagon in her sleep,  
the chorus hits their pitch and  
backs off their prior demands  
as  
the heat hits bitch level  
and  
the coal  
is

being shipped slowly to Texas down the railroad lines  
a  
block or so away in the bottoms ..

ready to leave the place  
for  
a  
good cold glass of suds  
as  
the  
hawks plunge towards the water for a fat fish  
and

the  
British get ready to give  
their  
6AM morning report in London ..

worlds away  
and no word of a suicide bombing in days ..

makes  
you  
a  
little tepid to look in the morning paper  
and

anxious to later look  
into  
the

eyes of the dreaming  
eye

and

the  
nudity that  
will

unfold  
delightfully  
before

your closed eye lids ..

**today's promise & no cigarette to prove it**

old Mexican man walkin'  
down 7th kicks a  
hard piece of long tin  
into the 101 degree street,  
going to the bar for  
a  
drink on the corner as  
the  
cops laugh it up with the locals  
in the 7th St. cafe off the highway  
path  
askin'  
for more bread  
and  
napkins  
to mop up what's left of the town ..

feelin' the sting  
of  
glorious heat as  
the Mexican orders  
another and the  
day gels together  
like a woman by  
a  
lanky,  
cool  
body of water ..

**they ask if i'm married,**

have kids,  
own a home  
or  
have  
more than one car ..

these kids  
around me all day  
and  
they go away in silence  
when  
they find out that none are the case ..

excited to find out that others  
are  
in their parent's boat ..

they want something to compare  
with  
or  
something

to write into their brain  
because  
that's what all the commercials and TV shows  
say  
should happen by a certain age ..

it's not necessarily the fear ..

the fear is what gets people  
wrapped up into messy situations to begin with ..

no,  
its being  
assured about where  
you

are  
at  
that

gets you  
to

the  
x  
a  
x  
y-z ..

## Talkin' poet legend of Kansas

I see him  
about every other day  
now that I have to  
be averted from my  
regular route down 'MINNESOTA' ..

they are building  
a  
new energy building  
and hotel  
for  
the limping town in Kansas ..

I see the KCK poet waddling down the street  
continuing a continual conversation ..

waggin his head,  
full gray beard speckled with black,  
bag of cold McDonald's,  
a stack of plagiarized - religious poems  
in a slightly orange manila envelope  
and  
just a talkin' to himself ..

I peer to the left to hear him or read his lips,  
but  
it's all nonsense ..

the right kind of nonsense  
for  
this  
drifter to keep the minute  
moving  
into  
another hour

and  
to keep him delightfully insane ..

the only way he knows  
and  
the only way I  
have come accustomed to know ..

the patron  
saint of a town  
just copyin'  
and  
talkin'

in  
circles until

the new buildings  
have  
their grand,  
grand  
opening ..

**still payin' off the down payment**

dangerous intersections,  
innocent strips of street  
as  
the people collect on the porch  
and hide the guns from the cops ..

here in the collective law of the land,  
we  
huddle around the TV set drama  
cheering on the next American Idol  
as  
we wait for the next one to have their 47 seconds of fame ..

perched on the edge of excitement at  
the  
sight of a television camera  
as  
many people spend  
years  
and  
years

to pay off  
that

big screen television screen ..

## started for the finishers

rolling  
the rocks  
over  
the  
stones as  
the  
stereotypes  
remain  
in the  
old Dolgin's ad still stuffed in the back seat of that  
Lincoln my dad used to talk so fondly about  
when Jimmy Carter was  
giving the people across the country enough  
reason to make Tums  
the only product in the medicine cabinet ..

sure,  
the nice guys did finish last  
because the nicer one's finished first  
while  
they  
turned into  
rapists,  
murderers,  
thieves,  
swindlers,  
con men  
and  
other such vocations of deceit ..

so,  
when the question of the hour  
is  
asked in the middle of a clock face that has since lost  
it's arms  
and  
remaining integrity,  
hop

on those fucking legs and feet  
and  
move

on down  
the  
street towards the largest ring  
of  
fire burning next  
to  
a

tiny

cup

of

water ..

## someway past Sunday

the drama amongst strained, old friends  
while  
I ready to leave the room ..

sure,  
you get to a point  
when  
the  
drama  
is  
something you accidentally run into on  
the  
TV  
or have with your gal after a week or month of  
not quite getting everything out ..

sure,  
when it comes  
to  
peripheral shit that can trickle into  
a  
conversation  
not

needed or  
known

for  
me,  
you

can  
smell my

position leaving

and have  
a  
good fucking  
yell

for  
all those interested ..

## something about a dream

dreams of the Mexicans  
attacking on  
the  
4th  
as  
the girl in the back of the class winks as the ring leader  
and  
largest conspirator ..

I stand in the front of the classroom  
asking  
angrily why I was berated in my mailbox for  
some time with  
rumors and threats of  
a  
coming  
ring of disaster that  
she promised me ..

she said nothing ..

feigning off that she knows limited English,  
I ask  
a  
man in the front row  
to  
translate my message of explanation ..

after speaking my  
line,  
the girl the back  
re-crosses her  
hands

and  
just winks  
a  
clean glare ..

and that's where  
we  
stood  
as  
the  
alarm  
poked through the morning  
air

on  
the  
morning of the 3rd ..

*she got me where I needed it*

the beauty  
of  
bein' in a relationship with someone for  
some time  
is  
that they will  
tend  
to  
amaze you by surprise  
with

a  
little  
thing

that's

pretty  
hi-fi sizable after  
you  
ponder it a moment ..

my lover friend and I took the kid by  
the  
bookstore tonight ..

got a needed cup of hot caffeine,  
read about the 50 most essential jazz albums of all time (somewhat accurate),  
and  
read the boy some stories by some fake trees  
in an  
extra small chair ..

as we were leaving,  
some guy leaning against he bus pole looked up at me with a cup of change and said,  
'HEY BUDDY, YOU MIND HELPIN' ME OUT WITH A DOWN PAYMENT ON A  
CHEESEBURGER?'

I have nothin',  
I told him  
as  
he looked up at my lady  
and  
said 'HI. I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR SOME TIME.'

'YEA,'  
she came back in ease.  
'HOW YOU DOIN'?'

He said,  
'GOOD. I'M LEAVIN' NOW.'

He got up as though she cracked a whip at his plastic cup  
and sent it hurtling past the new investment broker ..

He got up  
and hurried off down the street ..

I asked her,  
'WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU SAY TO HIM? DO YOU EVEN KNOW HIM?'

Yes,  
she said,  
he makes over \$48,000 a year as a pan handler,  
has been profiled on 20/20,  
has a big house paid for,  
she knows him from prior conversations,  
yet she has blasted him in the past for preying on willing souls ..

thus,  
she won ..

she sent the man packin' in a hurry  
and  
it didn't even seem to phase her ..

my wonder woman  
hidin'  
her  
garments  
under  
the  
cool of a good  
solid

night

without  
any money of our own to buy a book if we wanted it  
and  
a  
comfortable belly  
full  
of

food with the money and coupon

that the paying  
folk

have to use

to survive

this  
race to a money riot ..

several streets around

one basketball in the gutter,  
the boy on the porch just went back inside,  
the girl stays in bed to touch her vitals,  
the post man plows over a big stick in reverse as the  
sound  
goes  
beep  
beep  
bop  
beep,  
the cigarette is lit,  
the bald man in aviators swivels up the sidewalk west,  
head west chief,  
blues with Shapiro  
on the radio vox,  
last night was with us  
as  
this afternoon is,  
but the morning seems to find a way  
to allude me ..

a new couple  
is coming from  
the  
obstruction of the trees,  
down the middle of the street  
towards this  
home  
on  
the  
corner

and  
the other  
homes

hiding  
out  
there

on the corners,  
middles,  
ends  
and

somewheres  
there  
is

a place

to

lay their head down ..

**scale to the right; someone has left**

*little man blues  
in a mute room  
as  
the horse with a tamale in his back pocket  
and a scarf around his neck  
goes off to the bathroom  
to  
brush his teeth  
for another lover horse that is going  
to come  
by  
to witness the horse fuck  
that*

*is going to come through the door anytime  
with  
a  
torn shirt  
and  
a pair of snake eyes in his top front pocket ..*

*right above his heart ..*

## runnin' from stoppin'

the boy in the big black suburban  
sequels his tires  
towards the STOP sign,  
then runs the sign  
going slow ..

averting danger  
as  
though it's a brief caution  
the kids get tired of bein' told about  
by the  
school teacher  
who has  
their big bag of mistakes  
sitting on the front desk like  
a  
ring jewel she wants  
to personally hand out to the kids ..

the big black suburban  
remembers to stop at the next  
light  
as

the following street of streamin' cars  
doesn't stop  
and  
doesn't care  
to  
stop as  
Saturday streams by like  
a  
thought

that  
a kite

can only mimic

as  
speed is our passion  
and  
stopping

is just flat givin' up,  
out here ..

## **run to the sun**

I know it's hot  
and  
I moved on  
the hottest day of the summer ..

could be seen as nuts,  
middle of the damn day,  
guzzlin' a troupe of cokes and  
waters to stay on my feet ..

but  
I heard about a woman today on the radio  
who recently ran  
over 130 miles in an insane race across Death Valley ..

It  
felt fine to have a hot move  
until I heard about the balls on  
this gal ..

a supremam loon  
who is laughin' at us for  
just  
tryin' ..

## rock talk

the rock-n-roll shows  
and the  
rock-business talk  
between the musicians  
as

the club runs out of water  
and  
the  
beer is too expensive  
to  
just keep pissing out ..

it's very warm outside ..

too young for it to be so warm ..

the black and white photos of  
prior bands that played in the club  
and since made it big  
all  
look comfortable in their  
poses

and  
the  
fact that there are good girlfriends left in the world ..

so,  
the booking agent brings over  
a  
big lug of a guy  
with blond locks  
that has  
'CONNECTIONS'

as  
I drift into  
a talk  
with the booking agent's girlfriend  
with  
one wandering eye

and  
my  
trouble  
now  
is to pick  
an  
eye to talk to ..

## pops and the white frog

the 18-pound white frog  
playing a trombone  
was promised to come flying out of my dad's ass  
if  
I could return him a  
set of tapes I borrowed ..

well  
the day came ..

though,  
he is hospitalized and  
not  
in  
the  
shape to do so now ..

he needs a pace maker embedded into his chest to keep him  
moving

and  
I'll

just  
have  
to  
take a  
snow check on the frog

as  
the  
summer lakes  
croak with

folly  
and  
irony

here  
in  
this July town tonight ..

## people who belong in cities

was  
coming up the steps to the place,  
key in hand,  
ready to enter  
when the painted face of the  
gay man  
stopped me to  
ask  
about a scene in a movie  
involving Hawaiian shirts  
that was sparked by my  
shirt ..

I've seen him around from time to time  
hanging around the  
trash dumpster several floors below my window ..

he has a small dog,  
he wears tight and short shorts,  
his voice is high and jumbled ..

he usually says 'hello'  
yet  
this time he  
stopped me with the preface,  
'EXCUSE ME. I'M NOT ASKING FOR MONEY. I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU A QUESTION.'

he asks me the significance of Hawaiian shirts in a  
particular movie  
I have caught myself on the TV ..

I tell him  
that is signified the beaten man in the corporate world finally getting his pay day,  
making it to the island  
and  
sitting down to a solid beverage on the beach ..

he said,  
'CLOSE. VERY CLOSE. IT WAS THE SCENE IN THE MOVIE WHERE THEY GET TO WEAR  
HAWIIAN SHIRTS TO THE OFFICE.'

sure,  
sure,  
I assure him ..

then,  
he goes into another scene in the movie that was profound  
after watching it several times,  
but I couldn't understand what he was saying ..

his jumbled voice,  
painted face,  
small dog looking at me with the pouting bugged eyes  
was  
getting me a bit ..

yet,  
what strikes me the most about the man is that he's looking for  
someone ..

just some one  
to accept him for  
his  
way  
for  
the way he is ..

enough to scare the fucking wits out of  
most people you pass in a day,  
this

man  
was nothing short of harmless  
and

he's would be the one that  
would be wrongfully lynched in a small town masquerade  
behind  
a  
shit load of booze ..

the city  
is  
a  
good refuge for the  
freaks  
and  
lasers  
looking for a wall to land on ..

though,  
you may want to go a little light on the face paint  
even

if there is a  
festival in town,  
pal ..

**one work day keeps the burbs away**

this could be one reason  
why  
people move off to the suburbs  
and  
let the city deal  
with  
its own case  
of  
stories ..

I was interviewing a man named Fred for  
a  
job as a lab instructor  
when a red haired woman with black shades comes up to the  
door of my lab  
and  
asks if she could talk to me for two seconds ..

I leave Fred behind and go over to see  
what  
she wants ..

she asks if her three kids are still a part of the  
program we  
run at a YMCA ..

I tell her that her girl,  
Jasmine,  
is the only other remaining one coming  
down to the  
center on a regular basis ..

the others  
pulled off jagleg shit and  
got the permanent boot early in the summer months ..

though,  
I told her,  
Jasmine is the youngest,  
smartest  
and  
most honest of them all ..

well,  
she begins,  
I just wanted to  
check and see how they were ..

she continues by telling me that she  
has had a nasty crack habit

that is no more ..

she's been clean for some time now ..

this,  
behind a dirty pair of shades  
and  
a  
body and face that looks like its been  
through  
a  
field of barbed wire  
and healed by a hell hot sun ..

so,  
she says in a list of non-sequiters  
that her husband,  
which has custody of the three kids,  
is after her ..

that he is infiltrating their head with lies  
and  
the  
fact that it is presumed that she sold her child Jasmine  
off to a lesbian at age 5 for a rock of crack  
is absurd ..

further,  
she went on to tell me that she has been on the streets since  
she was 13 and has seen it all ..

drugs,  
prostitution,  
alcoholism,  
destitution  
and  
the other perils of street life  
that most of the public see only when going to see  
that once in a while film at the cinema  
on  
how  
fucked people can get  
when led by the  
body and needle into the depths  
of  
hell few can put a finger on ..

this,  
while Fred waits and  
the clock gets tired of likely hearing the same  
story over and  
over  
again ..

then,  
she ends by telling me to let Jasmine know that she loves her ..

telling her this  
without  
having her know that she stopped by ..

a court order is keeping  
her away from the kids ..

so,  
trying to hold to my word,  
I see Jasmine after my interview  
and  
Fred is off onto the sidewalk looking  
for  
that  
job  
while  
the  
paper's scream of better times that are to be coming ..

I think of a way to break the 'love' news to Jasmine  
without  
letting her know that her mother was in about 30 minutes before ..

though,  
I didn't have to search much farther  
as  
the  
news was broken by a little girl in the program that  
saw her mother there earlier ..

so,  
Jasmine asks for a minute with me ..

I close the door  
and  
she asks,  
'WHAT DID SHE SAY TO YOU?'

I tell her,  
'SHE WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT SHE LOVES YOU, KID. THAT'S IT. I WASN'T EVEN  
GOING TO LET YOU KNOW  
UNTIL THE BAG OF TRICKS WERE LAID OUT ON THE FLOOR AND I HAD NO CHOICE.'

she nods  
and looks distraught ..

she begins telling me the story of her mother ..

how she's still a crack whore,  
woke up in her front yard early the previous evening whacked to the gills,  
she does so much dope to keep her going for days that she occasionally OD's,  
she killed several kids by premature births in the toilet,  
has a strong restraining order against ever seeing the kids again,  
she lied to me and said that she didn't sell her daughter off,  
that she tried to kill Jasmine on a visit to the hospital by trying to flush

her down the toilet,  
she has been shot,  
stabbed,  
jumped from a moving car  
and  
all the like ..

basically she told me that there is no hope for her ..

I told her that she really probably needed to get hurt bad or have something taken  
away from her ..

Jasmine said nothing doin' ..

if what has happened so far hasn't changed the case yet,  
there was no hope ..

so there we sit,  
little to say  
and  
more that needs to be said ..

I told her to slough it off ad worry about herself ..

the fucked adults of the world can find their own way ..

kids can't continue going on raising the older folk  
while the record  
needle skips  
and  
I try to glean the truth from both ..

but the truth is that they are both right and both lying  
and  
the only wounds that can be healed are those  
that  
are given a chance to heal ..

so,  
as the sun continues to fully go down over the city  
and  
the burbs hop with an early night  
for  
bed

I say

keep on keepin' on  
as  
this city

kid gets  
ready to hop into the car  
on  
the  
street

and  
hope that it's still there and not broken into ..

just thought  
I  
would  
drop this by you  
before

I leave  
into  
these

mean  
mean

American streets,  
you ..

**one brave jazz man  
missed**

RAY BROWN died this week at 75 ..  
he took a nap before performing ..  
the most popular musician  
that no one knew about ..

dead without the world of music throwing  
a  
vigil ..

taking down every note as though it  
was  
a  
glass of water being devoured in the  
hot  
holy hell  
heat of July ..

he  
groomed the best and was softened by the  
greatest ..

a man  
with  
talents that should have bought him a steak,  
yet  
all he could aptly afford was a good hunk of tuna sandwich ..

gone after three seven and a half decades  
and  
a  
small mention on the radio news  
and  
evening TV segment ..

fuck right Ray ..

you  
gave it to the people  
and

I  
have  
a  
steak  
waiting

in the  
ether for you to grab on  
the

way out

as

the  
music

fades  
slowly

on  
the face of a quarter ..

three quarters and  
one  
nickel,  
pal ..

## once night in the city

I got the  
'HEY SIR, NICE MULLET'  
comment  
twice  
from  
3 short haired white kids walking with 1 bimbo ..

out with the gal and her 11-year old nephew and 4-year old son  
on a late Saturday evening stroll around the city  
as  
the  
suburb crew came flying out of a nearby hotel  
over  
the  
crosswalk towards their 4x4 dully ..

after their comment

I  
was pushed to almost say,  
'SURE. SURE. NOT ONLY DO YOU HAVE THE WRONG INFORMATION ABOUT A MULLET,  
WHICH A BUSINESS ON TOP AND PARTY IN THE BACK. MY HEAD IS ALL PARTY, KIDS. YOU  
ALL LOOK AWFULLY DAPPER IN THE EXACT SAME HAIRCUT THAT LOOKS AWFULLY  
NEAT AND TIDY AFTER GANG FUCKING YOUR GAL TOY FOR SOME TIME.  
CONGRATULATIONS. SHE'S BORED YET AGAIN AND YOUR ARE ALL FUELD BY BAD  
INFORMATION. GOOD LUCK ON YOUR TRIP BACK TO THE SUBURBS.'

Instead,  
I opted to not even broach the subject,  
but give  
them  
a  
good look in case they wanted to meet eyes with me ..

not one in the  
coward crew could do such ..

so  
this  
is for you ..

and  
there's  
nothing else

to be said  
as  
your women flip through a page of personals  
while

you

shit out  
the

last beer  
in  
that

case  
of  
beer that just went off sale ..

**old, tired flesh & bone**

she's been workin' too damn hard  
for  
too many years  
as  
her  
big son goes up the street  
next to her twirlin'  
a  
little blue bag  
full of pills,  
drink,  
pens,  
the rest of the stranger's thought bag  
or  
other ..

she winces as she  
reaches for that cell phone in her purse  
as  
the big boy looks around and wags like he's on the dance floor ..

she presses talk,  
feels like  
she's in one of those rap videos on BET  
and  
everything feels all right ..

just  
fine  
in  
a  
music video fantasy  
to  
take her away from the fantasy on the  
streets they talk about ..

it's gonna be a good day  
and  
her son

wags his big head towards his momma  
and  
aks',  
'WHAT TIME IS IT NOW MOMMA?'

she doesn't respond

to  
keep a hold of her day dream ..

## not broken after the break in

less than 3 days in  
the place  
and  
my car has already been broken into ..

left the passenger side door open ..

noticed all my tapes on my seat  
neatly stacked together  
with  
a gleam of ribbon looking anxiously towards my face ..

the glove box ripped open,  
a stuffed elephant lying on the open lip of the  
box ..

tape covers strewn on the floor,  
a newspaper open in the backseat,  
nothing was missin' ..

must have pissed this person off real good ..

the radio wasn't even fucked with ..

there's nothing finer than  
a  
crook that can't find a thing after  
all that hard work ..

it's my pleasure to serve  
the crooks out there  
with  
some of the worst

service goin' ..

come back by anytime  
for  
a  
sack of nothin'  
and

eyes gleaning  
with  
pupils

of  
potential ..

**no hips on that one**

knives in trumpet cases  
and  
people waiting at the corner,  
neighborhood bar ..

sneaking,  
stealing glares,  
glances,  
glasses of  
used beer ..

socks full of luck pennies  
that refuses to be stuck in gum ball machines  
and  
the  
sky is getting ready to rain machetes  
and  
blow low a tune  
from  
the  
saxophone's accompanying swan song ..

so,  
as you look up for the drops  
to fall,  
the only drops  
are  
going to  
be  
the  
suckers

licking the old lady's lollipop  
as  
she  
twirls in a dance  
class

oblivious  
to  
her

robbed home  
and

an insurance rep that just had a heart attack  
riding  
his  
favorite girl  
square

in

the

hot shot spot ..

## next fall

gone with the voice  
and  
inherited by the metaphor,  
the  
phone takes on a strange tone  
as

she comes to me with a  
tailored  
voice  
and

tempered walk ..

just  
waitin'  
for

the next big moment to happen again here in  
America

as  
the  
boring folk  
do  
their  
boring  
things

while the curly tip of an ice cream cone  
gets

handed over  
to the child's hand

exactly two months  
to  
Sept. 11 of 2002

and  
1 year later to  
the

next time the

big day of days  
comes  
towards us again

in

the

invisible messages floating over  
a

bay

there in Cuba

and

a  
site

somewhere across the Hudson in NY, NY ..

near 7 on 8/1

pink dress,  
white shirt,  
handful of groceries,  
nothin' said  
&  
everything  
that needs to be said  
hangs in  
the hot,  
soiled airs  
of this apartment slightly sweetened  
by  
the  
bits  
of  
good,  
good  
smoke  
wafting ..

## morning move

headstrong,  
apples growing along the fence  
as  
9AM eats my cup of coffee  
&  
we all than the believers for not going  
back to the way  
it  
was ..

sure,  
with the licks clickin' this  
morning,  
the address book only  
holds a bunch of numbers as  
another person I know decides  
to  
move ..

we're on the massive on the massive  
migration to the next change  
as  
people when we  
suppose it  
would be  
more  
sufficient to have consistency ..

oh,  
I need to get up ..

these  
people  
that make  
me  
move ..

## metal fire song

just lit my  
cigarette with  
the  
zippo I found  
in  
the  
old insane man's  
old rental home ..

now emptied  
and  
falling loose  
with  
the  
magnolia leaves dropping,  
I walked in

with my lover  
to take a look over the piece  
later inhabited by the Mexicans ..

broken tile,  
a dirty lot of floors,  
the must of old life flitting about,  
then  
I come across a kitchen

and  
a  
zippo with a football helmet on the top of the face ..

I picked up fire's  
potential,  
brought it back to life  
with a flint and hot fluid ..

now,  
flickering with too much to drink  
and

a  
field of cigarettes plucked and  
ready  
to  
smoke ..

I take in this pile of smoke for you

insane

man

and  
those

ramblings that made  
the  
local

papers  
and  
the  
back

pages of the psychiatric hospitals

patient listing ..

here's  
to

you with this smoke

I light once again ..

## mayoral chase

I wrote a  
letter to the mayor of a big city in Kansas ..

it pissed her off  
something  
good enough  
that  
she called a higher up  
on the job  
to  
give me a good look at  
and  
try to make it right ..

told her the town  
I worked in and paid taxes in was  
an 'overblown joke' ..

this,  
in re-election time,  
didn't settle  
well ..

she thought that I was teaching  
the kids I work with  
'negative' shit and that  
I should be stopped ..

so,  
I invited her first in command to come by and  
talk about the letter ..

not taking a lick of a letter off the letter,  
we  
talked ..

she walked away happy ..

wants the Mayor to come by and see the kids  
and I  
on  
the  
job ..

sure,  
politics is worse than kids play ..

when the object of criticism comes under fire,  
they always send out their assistant ..

when they are jubilant,  
they talk about how good it is that taxes are being hiked to help such worthy causes ..

when they don't arrive into work that day,  
there's no press conference ..

&  
when the kids  
speak

seems  
to  
me that

the politic-ians show  
up

when the camera is hungry

and  
there's something

we don't know about  
at  
stake ..

so,  
Ms. Mayor,  
if I didn't mention it in my  
letter  
to  
you

please  
read the next line ..

'fuck you' ..

good night,  
folks ..

**makin' it somewhere**

ghetto copter searches out the  
new body of food  
and  
her ambles like her wants to know what's  
going on in a parked car,  
lit apartment or  
a  
patch of growing grass ..

shit,  
probably only needs one  
more drink he thinks  
as

the  
next of black out comes towards  
his crooked walk  
and

the  
city  
just stays hush  
for  
the  
sound of a dog bark  
remaining

as  
he  
disappears off like the vapors off a fast approaching highway bluff ..

gone,  
probably fiddling  
with  
bills  
remaining in his pocket  
or

looking for his lady ..

I'm pulling for  
a  
couch for this guy ..

## mad midtown move

the crazy family  
with the black boy  
moved  
from the neighborhood  
quickly

as  
the  
vacant lot  
looks more  
full  
of  
life than ever before ..

took them under a week  
to  
announce they were moving  
and  
less time to orchestrate the quiet move ..

on down the lane  
of  
crazy glances  
and  
forced lies behind closed doors  
as  
the  
black boy shakes back and forth in silence  
for all he knows  
and  
more that he would like to forget ..

James,  
when you make it into your new place  
do

what you  
can to get away ..

even if it requires you  
to  
drift away mentally on a toy air craft carrier ..

there's  
more

than one way to get away and  
going from  
house  
to

house with the insane dropping pills  
down your throat to keep you  
calm

won't do ..

you have to  
ride  
ride  
ride  
the  
rain

for  
all the water  
you

want to eventually pump out of that well ..

**Lookin' at me more than  
I'm lookin' at you**

flippin'  
by in her flimsy shoes,  
green shorts,  
yellow shirt,  
spanish to the top of the eyebrow,  
walkin' over  
the  
branch in the road  
as  
the  
roadsters  
scream by and  
Etta  
tells  
us  
how the man finally  
left her before she  
had  
to  
kick him out  
to  
the  
landfill ..

oh the sweet memories  
as  
Elvis makes  
a  
mayonnaise and pickle  
sandwich somewhere  
in  
the  
Caribbean ..

it's in the cat and mouse  
days  
of  
this August heat  
wave

as  
the  
ground appears to be  
stable  
in  
the  
eye of a cigarette burn  
on  
the index finger ..

sure,  
middle America  
in  
the  
middle of talking about another war  
as  
the  
chess board  
goes flying off into the air  
and

the  
last glass of white  
wine

gets dumped  
down the throat of  
the

young

girl  
walking home  
to  
feed her infant ..

**Late  
Hot  
So  
July**

coal miners  
stuck  
in  
a  
shaft,  
the man corners the corner and  
goes up the street  
with  
yet another bag of groceries  
while  
the  
president blasts off about a bomb  
that just went off in a crowded area in  
Israel ..

sure,  
the drama,  
instincts,  
human meddling,  
cops with jobs,  
preachers with more words than thoughts,  
the  
time  
for  
sugar  
robbed the salt  
of  
all it's potency

as  
the  
cook  
just got the meal

at  
a  
point

where it's  
ready to be shoved into the oven ..

what  
will  
he do now ?



# Grandview Middle School

**Thursday, Friday and Saturday**

**February 22, 23, 24**

**7:00 p.m.**

Tickets

(available at the door)

Thursday Performance \$3.00

Friday Dessert Theater \$5.00

Saturday Performance \$3.00

**just talk to me, man**

stop me the next  
time  
I have to interview someone for a job ..

such a humiliating  
display  
to  
watch most of the time ..

there was this one I interviewed  
the  
other day to teach folk how to use  
computers  
in  
a  
lab ..

his name was Dwight ..

a good natured man at around 45 ..

desperate for the job  
and  
telling me everything about him other than what  
I would hire him for ..

'A BLACK BELT'  
'GOOD AT GUITAR - HENDRIX, YOU KNOW - PURPLE HAZE'  
'THE TIME HE ALMOST DROWNED AND GOT THE VOICE FROM THE LORD THAT TOLD HIM  
TO GO OUT AND TELL THE WORLD ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE'  
'HIS FEW TALENTS'  
'TAKE ME UNDER YOUR WING - HE ASKED ME'

when it came down to what he could do on  
the  
computer there wasn't much there ..

and good for him for kicking someone's ass  
or playing the picker well ..

just seems so futile  
when someone comes in to fix your sink  
and an hour later tells you how well they can make a bologna sandwich ..

good,  
good,  
but where am I going to flush the bad pieces  
of  
the  
sandwich when done ..

down the sink that won't work  
or

up the crank

where the bullshit arm  
is  
swinging  
and  
swirlin' with

temptuous vigor ..

*just numbers until we meet*

she's watching  
a  
film  
in

a bar  
on  
31st ..

she calls me  
at my place  
on  
11th

as  
the  
11th day of July goes  
just east of the sun  
and  
west of the moon  
over  
the  
diva's radio croon ..

sure,  
down with the empty bottle just thrown  
by

a neighbor friend across the way

and fluttering with the new pacemaker  
in  
my pop's chest ..

another lane  
of  
traffic  
opened

as  
the  
bridge closes  
down

for  
new

repairs,  
but

more access

once you snap out

of  
that

nap

in  
the  
12 minute  
of  
the  
8th hour ..

## inside vs. outside porch

a big  
reason for moving was to have a porch to  
hang out on,  
some hardwood floors,  
a good spot with action around  
and some space to let  
my  
legs stretch  
in the nude or close to ..

I found it ..

and looking around at all the places in this town  
with big swoopin' porches  
with a solid view and spread to look around  
I never saw anyone out on the porch ..

Is everyone too busy to  
sit with a cup on the stoop  
or  
do they come out when I'm not out lookin' around ..

tend to believe that people just get porches  
as a novelty ..

there's no real hangin' going on and  
that  
strikes me as odd ..

so,  
as I hang out on the porch in  
this new place ..

try to join me,  
the mosquitoes with the Nile virus  
aren't going to bite ..

they're after the animals  
and  
the

view is  
dandy enough  
to  
take the risk ..

we'll see you outside  
if  
you have the balls ..

**in case it doesn't make it ..**

when  
the page is finally  
written in  
stone,  
the  
rock masonries  
are  
going  
to  
take up knitting  
and

tell stories  
of  
rock climbers

that  
made it to the top of the pass  
to  
merely take  
a  
short  
sweet piss  
into

the folds ..

**i'm looking over later afternoons, now**

the old guy  
ambles slowly up  
37th on his 10 speed ..

in the easiest,  
slowest gear  
with a satisfied grin,  
big pack on his  
back  
and  
bitch heat hittin' him on all sides ..

must be runnin' an  
experiment  
as  
the  
kids in this hood  
walk to the newest hangout  
to  
contemplate adulthood  
and  
the angel that may  
save  
them one day ..

## **I choose to be around the kids because**

the  
adults are get on my  
grapes ..

I choose to be around the kids because  
the car  
being sold to me is  
almost new and  
there are  
no miles and a cheap pay schedule ..

I choose to be around the kids because  
I'm doin' my fuckin' damndest  
to keep  
them  
out of a job  
that  
will

turn them into angry mongers  
towards the end of their 401k mode ..

I choose to be around the kids because  
a mistake  
is merely an attempt  
and

they will likely be better than  
all us adults some day ..

I choose to be around the kids because  
there's something  
about  
an  
altered fire

that  
can

keep your hands  
just  
right  
and  
warm

when the cold wind  
comes smacking down  
on

you like a 4 cent drug dealer asking for your last nickel  
in  
the  
silver stack ..

## hot liquid in my lap

rushin' to get into the car,  
start the engine,  
big full hot cup of coffee  
to  
get to work and interview someone  
to  
teach computer's to kids  
as  
I type on this one now ..

engine starts,  
I smash over a green ball growing on the tree next to me and falling into  
the street ..

felt like I popped my front left tire  
as  
I switch the car into second  
and  
smack into the side of the coffee mug  
and  
spill the whole damn thing into my lap ..

still a pace or two from home,  
I say fuck it and let the pool of coffee  
slosh around my lap  
and  
seat ..

worth a good laugh  
and  
the mark of a morning started ..

ends up that the guy named 'MICHAEL'  
cancelled on the interview  
and  
I ignored the kid knocking on the door  
to get in because  
I wanted to leave soon ..

letting the coffee spill get cold  
on  
my lap ..

I had to get back out into the world  
to take a bath  
and  
let  
my  
new found friend  
of

coffee

evaporate in  
the  
rising heat outside ..

just  
evaporatin'  
into  
the  
day

as  
everything on the  
ground  
and

streets  
rise like mushrooms  
in  
a  
brand new field  
of  
brown ..

## hot clean woman sweeping up the bridge

ahhh  
there's my gal with the bandana on the bridge ..

at the highest,  
yellowiest,  
hottest,  
nawing,  
choking,  
relentless,  
vomitous  
parts of the day  
she's  
up there on the bridge sweeping  
and  
sweeping ..

this woman always has a broom  
and works  
around the boys  
who  
crank the hand hammers,  
yank concrete from the ground,  
hang under a shaded piece of patio furniture ..

but  
notice my gal there on the bridge looking down with her  
dark brown shades pushing the dirt of another's dollar  
off to the side  
as  
a  
shiftless kick of dust came flying over her head  
and lifting the back of that bandana into  
a  
fine bristled point ..

sure,  
my gal  
with her  
baby blue,  
pink,  
faded red,  
yellow,  
faded cobalt blue  
and  
other assorted bandanas  
just

sweeps  
and  
weeps

up

all the dirt  
on  
that  
little stretch of road  
going to Fairfax ..

sure,  
my gal  
with the clothe around her head  
could  
probably kick every male's ass on  
that  
bridge

which  
is  
likely why she's  
always  
sweeping up ..

## **have sack of CD's and everywhere to go ..**

been evicted from sun warped cassette tapes,  
the 8-track was 8 times away from my generation,  
the next train with vinyl stopped by the wrong station  
as

I burn more  
songs

and  
laser treat my toe nails  
for

the  
horny  
girls

eating the remains of my music ..

so,  
tonight,  
as I ready to move  
out of this place ..

my hopes ride on a sack of CD's  
and

every damn  
corner

to  
be ..

## **fuck-her & them**

I'm the biggest  
fool  
I  
know

hoping every minute  
that  
I find  
the  
genius

who  
will never  
be  
discovered  
and

mistook a clever crossword  
puzzle  
for

an  
IQ test ..

## First day or so off Baltimore St.

found  
the coop to land  
on ..

off main,  
out  
of  
Pennsylvania ..

where the cars are loud  
and

can fall apart if you lend the right ear ..

feels  
like

home

looks

like home ..

somewhere the insanity  
never

had a chance to leave  
as  
I sit in  
the

overgrown  
heat

and wait for it  
to  
grow

grow into  
a  
large

pile of hot rock

I can lie  
in

and

laugh ..

## firecrackers and police lights

everyone's in a roar  
over  
the  
4th day of July  
this year ..

some months after the terror  
and  
another watermelon  
into the  
cold  
headlong path  
of  
fruits  
and  
rumors ..

the air was thick  
with the residue  
of  
exploding the Chinese paper origami's  
and

the people were still shooting them off ..

there wasn't a space of 3 or more seconds where  
you could count  
when people weren't blowing  
their  
wallets loose ..

everywhere ..

even in the city ..

at one point,  
we noticed some kids shooting  
fireworks off  
a  
bridge overpass  
at cars ..

whistlin' firecrackers,  
roman candles  
and assorted fire  
at  
passing cars ..

made me wonder where the fuck the parents went ..

then,  
the sirens careened around the corner at the nearby  
intersection towards the  
kids  
and  
their settling smoke in the evening's 4th symphony ..

I could almost hear  
the  
explosion of piss tricklin' down their  
legs  
as  
the  
car pulled to a stop

and  
the  
sounds  
of

the night  
finally  
and  
briefly came  
to  
a

needed  
halt ..

**digs are new**

movin' in,  
movin' out  
as  
August 1  
comes and the lilac bushes go ..

movin' out,  
movin' in  
as  
the  
directions take the compass on  
a  
confusing excursion ..

movin' on,  
movin' out  
as  
the  
new place on  
Baltimore feels more than moved in  
&  
I lay here  
like a beaten catcher's mitt  
looking for the  
right  
hand  
to  
play with ..

*Cool August Winds*

revving engines,  
crack whores in pink prancing the block,  
shirtless dudes looking for a couple of tough fists,  
the broken down suburban starting again,  
landladies trimming the grass,  
old green fruit falling to the ground,  
a tired couple fucking off into sleep,  
the small children wait for one more book to hear the folks read,  
the read end of a breathless woman,  
the last of the noodles going down the throat of an advertised dragon,  
loud tunes coming from a guys back seat at the intersection of  
37th and somewhere

here  
in  
the mid to downtown  
on

an  
evening cooled by luck  
and  
heated up by what  
will

make you  
sweat

with a little work  
and  
luck,  
if you're lucky ..

## company minions and the hopeful quarter

corporate tycoons  
pictured on the front of newspapers  
in  
cuffs

as  
company after company around here  
file  
for  
Chapter 11 ..

new unemployment lines,  
the  
employee again gets the ram rod  
trying  
to  
pay the rent and get  
canned vegetables ..

I say  
lock up these clowns in their  
dirty bills  
of  
financial health ..

go in with swords and root out the  
white collar criminals in lieu of the

honest trying to make a portion of the  
eternal dollar  
floating in a hologram over  
the  
reflective glass of the tall skyscraper ..

always had a hunch that the  
people were getting  
the

losing face of the penny,  
but  
now

there seems to be a glimmer of justice  
as

I  
wait to pay rent with my meager  
pay

and  
watch the  
next  
can of beer whiz by on the conveyor belt ..

**can you believe the heat?**

it was so hot the other night  
that showering with the gal before going to bed  
in a hot fucking house  
that  
all the beads of sweat evaporated  
in  
the  
matter of minutes ..

just a little bit of wet  
on the head  
and  
her  
red hot vagina  
would have burned my fingertips loose  
if  
I would have  
gotten any hotter ..

a  
clammy set of balls,  
the  
walls  
are  
on fire  
and

we stick in the middle to  
garner a little  
of  
the  
fan that  
doesn't want to work as well as the box had advertised ..

so  
fucking  
hot  
that  
the water on the nightstand was boilin' a little  
and  
the blankets were  
blurring into a bed of ashes ..

the delirium  
has  
set in so  
high

that I believe  
I

will make a dive into her hot hole

to make

sure

that

I won't forget it when that cold

January

march

comes knocking like a thief in blue cloth on my

hard

hard

front door

## big fat fuckin' kitchen

books in hand,  
the air smells like echinecea,  
while  
the  
green apples fall to the ground  
and  
the wires find a way to get stuck back into the air ..

it's midtown in all  
that  
downtown  
can't offer in this town  
as  
my new white house  
on  
the corner of Baltimore

stands  
as  
the  
chance  
between sanity and insanity

and  
all the dripping sweat coming down  
the back of  
my arms

says  
that  
I'm going  
to

be here

talkin' crazy to a neighbor

that  
just stopped in to get  
a  
jar of mustard  
he  
forgot

to  
pick up for his girl

cravin' a big bite  
healthy

hot dog ..

**before the lids close**

bored kids in the middle of  
37th street ..

3 guys,  
one girl,  
a lighter,  
just shadow boxin'  
waitin' for the creeps  
to disappear  
so  
they can take  
over  
&  
rule the rest  
of  
the  
over world ..

## bantering me about the hood

before leaving work tonight,  
a kid  
asked me why I don't live in the hood ..

he laughed,  
turned his head,  
clapped hard  
as  
I looked on ..

I turned to leave  
and  
thought  
he  
just  
wouldn't get my address  
and  
that I do want  
to live in that hood ..

under and on the hood  
as  
the  
tap dancers  
silently stream by  
because  
truths are the tails that  
leave our ass bare and  
free of protrusions ..

**August 1, 2002**

fan blasting on my face,  
the smell of fresh cut grass,  
sun on all walls,  
the wax has hardened,  
plastic spoons for the gold toothed talker,  
fast black men walking by,  
used cup of overnight water,  
the radio works like a carburetor,  
trash can looks like a tired mouth ready to shout again,  
almost tall enough to reach the fan blade  
& short enough to know that all I can afford is the necessities ..

sure,  
never had money ..

grew up with none ..

make just enough to pass the test  
now ..

guess I've been destined to stay away from it,  
the allergies and headaches of it ..

just  
too much for this kid to stomach ..

## August5th

crosswalk intersection  
people wavin' each  
other on as  
the  
next one in flight wants  
nothin' more than a burnt  
egg sandwich  
and  
a  
way to recoup the losses from Uncle Sam  
and get the fuck out of town ..

while the Gulf of Mexico  
laughs and the Texans  
threat the clown  
in the front yard with running make up and  
shufflin' feet  
lookin' in for a piece of bread  
or

a  
reason  
to  
get across the walk  
to  
cross  
the  
sidewalk  
to  
the  
place where the trees  
look like  
sugar cane

and  
the distance  
looks  
like

nothin'  
more  
than a walk in the  
paltry park ..

## another lesson in supply and demand

been searchin' for a  
new  
place to live ..

tryin' to move on down  
the lane

as  
I call all the ads  
and  
leads like a reporter looking for  
the  
smoking gun hidden in the smoke bush ..

on my first visit to walk through an apartment  
I got a quote of \$425 on a joint  
off Broadway  
that had potential ..

I met the old  
post artsy-fartsy land lady  
with a likely penchant for red wine  
and  
the minute we stepped foot in  
the  
place  
she  
threw a \$200 price hike  
on  
a  
place  
when all I can afford  
is  
yesterdays  
rent

sure,  
guess I looked like I have money  
when  
the next guy in line moving down the  
street wants to offer me a  
free lunch ..

she said  
there were no other cheaper properties  
and  
that I wasn't mistaken bein' in that place ..

makes  
me

wonder if there was a hundred stuck to the bottom  
of  
my shoe  
or  
if

the caravan for another dollar on the back of Lincoln's hair piece  
was  
tryin' to poke me in the eyes ..

sure,  
a dollar  
down  
for  
an  
unearned lie

is  
the lesson  
we

all  
went

through

way back when  
school was  
just  
a  
free thing we  
all

had to arrive at ..

## **all the world's a joke**

and  
everyone is laughin'  
as  
the  
gimp buys a new wide screen TV  
and

the hostage  
becomes the hijacker ..

something cool in the water  
as  
the  
tide turns into a mouthful of nectarine  
while  
the  
diamond swoops into a sea gull looking  
for  
the  
newest pile of smut on the beach to stick his beak in ..

the battle of  
will becomes  
the  
fight of Kenny  
as  
the  
world turns  
into

a  
new  
bright  
blue pond of water ready to tackle  
the

imp  
needing  
something

more in the morning magazine  
to  
laugh

at

while he forgot to read the report  
on  
how the whole world is a joke

and  
everyone is  
laughin'

keepin' you  
awake

while you try to battle the prophesy  
stuck

in  
the  
bottle beneath the sand ..

## a thing tonight

tucked loosely under  
a  
forest green  
comforter  
on  
a  
90 degree evening  
in the buff  
as  
the crooks rob the criminals  
&  
the fan slices thru the air like  
a  
chef ready to chop be up like a carrot stick,  
stuff me in a mushroom  
and  
feed me to the other  
vegetables  
in  
the  
oven  
pan ..

**a mid-line parable**

moving the dogs  
into  
the  
tiger's den  
as  
the cocks fight in the Kentucky sun  
and

the only  
remaining piece of bread has  
turned into a ball of penicillin that will  
be shipped off  
the  
Mongolia  
to  
cure a kid's viral infection the doctor's can't diagnose ..

bringing in the cats  
out of the whale's aquarium  
for  
the fish are boiling  
with curiosity  
and

if they  
start stringing together the cat's 9 tails of curiosity  
there

could be  
a  
fight

that

will  
bring the straights of Tripoli

to a  
dry,  
flat

end ..

## a good kid & some mother

his mom's name is  
Missy

and  
you can only imagine

what the  
hell  
is  
going on from there ..

sure,  
she takes jabs at his chest  
and does  
her best  
to  
toss the words  
down his ears as though  
he  
was a Nazi in some previous scheme ..

these  
parents that put their kids up on the stand day after day ..

this kid  
is  
a  
good kid

with an 11-year old curiosity about  
Europe,  
porn,  
dirt bikes,  
a tranquil swimming pool on a warm day  
and

all he wants to do is get away from her ..

if fact,  
the kid almost begs to stay over with my lover friend and me  
whenever he has  
the  
chance ..

if there's any  
hell that's as hot as it's advertised,  
it has to be  
the  
firm desire to not  
be around a mother  
&

this kid  
has it ..

so,  
when he's riding his skateboard  
around the city streets at night  
with the tall  
tall  
buildings winking like they know something and the local cops  
come to give him  
a  
warning  
for  
riding along the sidewalk

they're nicer than the  
mother could  
ever be

and  
actually give him some kind of reinforcement  
for  
doing something he digs ..

so,  
young man,  
keep fucking up the sidewalks  
and  
streets

cause  
you're

going to be all right

and  
it's the top bunk for you whenever you want it,  
kid ..

**a chance so often**

you've had your chance,  
while the bowlers  
took their  
lead and aimed at the high  
cockatiels in the sky ..

sure,  
you had your opportunity as  
the kid  
with a stack of handlebars and  
somewheres to be went on by  
and through the stop sign  
with  
no hands to hold onto his grip ..

lands of opportunity,  
cars swishing by the Main street  
and  
the burrito eaters  
are  
ready to go back to their well ventilated homes  
with  
closed shades

and open conversations about things  
they won't remember

even  
when called on  
it

or  
brought to clarity by the bottle ..