

Joefiles LXXII
badgerin' some blow-up dolls



**sometimes it comes down to
a relatively simple interaction ..**

maybe a handshake,
pat on the back,
touch of the head,
pull of the finger,
touching a toe,
licking an ear,
smelling a lip ..

somehow they
make it on the top 5 list
when the
day
has
come to the stop sign ..

sure,
you can take the big times,
climbing a mountain,
rebuilding an old Chevy motor,
or
getting married while parachuting
out
of
the plane ..

they'll happen
sooner or later,
but
it's the tiny
moments ..

the small ones
you

miss if you
keep on blinking ..

so
keep 'em open,
kids ..

**thanksgiving morning
2002**

suddenly
the world looks naked ..

brown branches,
the twigs of spring all nipples out,
the clits,
cocks
and
clogs of yesterday hold themselves
open to the
cold winds ..

the dumpsters open,
waitin' for trash,
the cat howling,
waiting to go again
down the steps and outside,
then the naked trees shed again ..

everything down to the tops of toes
as they tell us to give thanks,
thanks for the past year of days,
thanks for the ding dongs,
my moccasins,
that sports team named after an Indian
and thanks for
the nudity all around here ..

can finally
see the neighboring houses
and
the other folk
that can look in and

see
me (us)
now ..

the cat & the saint

the things you notice
in a day ..

was getting on the highway ..

a triangle of sorts ..

saw a cat stuck up in the grass contemplating
a
crossing ..

stuck there with ears stuck back,
looking
around petrified ..

all of me in the hurry I was in
wanted to stop,
though it would have been on hell of a pile up if
I tried ..

just kept goin'
thinkin' about that cat
wanting to cross the street
and

the chicken

that supposedly
beat it ..

I was pulling for it ..

pullin' for it to be warm
right now,
makin' it across the street

and
into the arms

of
the saint

we
all drove by,
but

couldn't see
there in the bushes across the way ..

the closure walk

went through the
a Sept. 11 exhibit in
DC
recently ..

no one talked ..

the only exhibit I had been through where there
was
nothing but silence ..

touched
a
girder from the World Trade Center,
saw Guliani's hat,
then
I left a message on a phone booth that
was part of an enormous digital audio archive
the museum was putting together
on
the
day and after ..

I picked up the receiver and had 3 1/2 minutes to tell where I was
when I heard about the events and
how I have changed since ..

had no problems with where I was at ..

took nearly the 3 minutes up with that,
then,
came to how I've changed since ..

seemed like a rhetorical question,
but I sat a bit in silence
and
hung up ..

the more I thought about it,
it was one of the more
complex

questions from a
stranger
I

have

received
in

some
time ..

as
the
change

falls into my pocket
for

one more phone call back home ..

the crush of folks

in the street,
hopped up on drink,
the jazz band won't play anymore,
Ted's pissed about everything closing so early
because the dreams of late night Manhattan
come chasing him like a clothed skeleton that's foolin' all of us ..

the cops are
getting in the face of a crowd starting a fight
as
we look on
and
keep the peripherals open for a cab to get us back uptown ..

Jose looks over and
says there will be a riot,
or back in LA at least,
if one punch is thrown ..

I'm looking around for a way to get out
or
speculate how
it
would go down

if the drunk
crowd

in the DC street
weary of a sniper,
weary of the new times around
is

going

to
get 'em
between

the heart
and
over the right breast ..

the dour stories on the evening news ..

over and
through
and over
and about
it's

no wonder that people think
the world is losing its mind ..

starts with a man getting gunned down
on
a
porch across the street from a catholic school ..

details are sketchy ..

the police aren't ready to
say
anything more about the details
other
than a disturbance
that warranted a
man getting gunned down ..

a drifter ..

someone that has caused trouble in the past ..

had a connection to the past
as
the
casters move on to the next story
of
unsolved murder
and
new kidnapping ..

shit,
don't even know what the weather is
like out back ..

just
how the human weather is brewing as
the
stations
break the
breaking news,
action first,
investigative eye ball working for me
and
weather man waiting for
his segment at the end

with a full bullet proof vest on waiting on location
as

the sports guy calls
his bimbo girl

and
the
rest of us wonder

if the two main casters
are

getting it
on
when the camera
is shut

off
and

the crime

is happening ..

happening
and

will
soon be brought
to
a
cast near you ..

the professional and the understudy

the professional comedian
talking to the real
comic
genius
and
it
got
ugly ..

we needed stitches and
a
transfusion ready to pump new life ..

I brought him up to the place after the show,
he was talking some show gig
talk,
getting jive like a black man
when he really wanted to get
past the funnies
and
the comic genius wasn't going for it ..

he went over to the couch to watch a show he'd
been waiting for all night long ..

said that the drama in the room
wasn't enough to hold his attention
to the TV drama in front of him
while
the
stand-up sat perched in his chair,
chatting it up about
rumors
aimed against the girl of his best friend that
cheated
at
one point in the relationship ..

this,
as the genius
turned around
and got angry at the suppositions
and
the
fact that the girl wasn't around to defend herself ..

it got uglier
as
the show went on

the booze
flowing

there were other places
we had
to be as I packed up
and
left with the stand-up man
and
the comic genius shook my hand and said that
we needed to get together when the man
with the
talk

would shut-up for abit ..

I left

and
laughed abit about it all ..

the skip,

skip,
skippin' song ..

goin' back,
heard the same
same
same
same
chorus
a number of times
as
the
needle eye

dreams of vinyl
and
the days
of
smooth
smooth
smooth
playin'

over the turntable ..

wait,
wait
wait

it has hit a good stretch ..

no
no
no
no
no

it
skipped
skipped
skipped again

and
it's one of the best songs on the
fuckin'
fuckin'
fuckin'

record disc ..

you know
you know
you know ..

this cat growls

the cat
on the entrance
with the meow and
constant following ..

there are many times I can't even find
her
anywhere in the place ..

but tonight ..

tonight ..

she's at my feet pacing,
looking up at me,
goin' about like
a
nervous senior shopping the
vegetable aisle ..

talking more
than if her mouth could open
to let me
in
on
the feline fantasies that go
and
go
and
go ..

sure,
still not leavin' me alone
and
just goin' about
like I'm a bag of cat nip
ready to be ripped open and dropped on
the
ground ..

yet,
she doesn't say anything
as
her mouth
moves
ever
more
than before and louder ..

her smudges
of brown

have turned red
and
she sits on top of this monitor
oblivious that my
fingers are moving
and
moving
about her ..

the
face
just peers on
over
to
the
gay couple
getting
into the forest green
truck

and
getting
out

to join
the
walkers
talkin' about nothing ..

Tuesday

cars are going wild
out front today
as
the
day of fall coming down in a big
way litters the streets,
sidewalk,
driveways
and
other patches of concrete with leaves ..

cars going up the one way street,
people pulling up and honking in front of a building
and
then
in
a
confused moment drives off,
still more cars keep coming
by
as

the
strangers fall off the bar stool
and
the sound of the school horn whistling ..

it's
a
day drawn with a pen
I
can't

find
and
that's just fine
and
good
for

right now ..

water at the gate and history in my socks

never know when
you're
going
to either run into or
look down the pipe of history ..

goin' down the parkway in the back of
the cab
with an inner city kid in DC
and lookin' out the window
as
the
political condos
and
living quarters of the folk
in DC that get to live
with the sights
and no vote ..

so,
I notice a good lookin' building wrapped around in
a
semi-arc
when the driver says that it's Watergate ..

no shit
and
dick's last trick ..

**what you do
against what you want to do**

so much time
it's
hard
to choose with all options
going down
on the couch ..

a cat on my chest,
sink full of dishes,
the found paints waiting for the plier pry,
the computer looking over like a friendly pimp,
my idle shoes waiting to play on the devil's playground,
Johnny Cash CD with all it's writing and silent face,
the pictures to be taken,
strangers walking by with a coat tossed over the shoulder,
the uncut face hair,
a stinkin' head of hair waiting for a good washing,
a talk with the neighbor,
calls on the phone,
the book in my hands,
and
the decision of the day made ..

I'm going to read as
the
woman looks back and
forth
wondering when the
right time is going to
be to
cross the street

and
do what she is going
to
do

as
I finally settle
into
one

thing
that

I'm going
to
do
this
one day

I took off from work

and
know for certain that
I need more
and
more

like it in
the
next couple of days ..

with a bit of grace

there's a divine old bird
that works the front desk
of the place I work at ..

the kind of gal you wouldn't know what to do if she decided
to hang up her shoes and
not come
in one day ..

so,
today,
the gale that runs the place said that Grace
had to go ..

she told her to leave,
she was a bit sick and her pride
wouldn't let her leave on her own ..

so,
I didn't try to pry
the door much,
but I was told that Grace
had to wash out her underwear ..

an accident on the way to work
and the cruel fate or hand on cards that age
has a way of dealing ..

Grace was told to take a rest
for a bit ..

the tragedy and beauty is that Grace likely
felt she let everyone down
and
the only let down was that she wasn't around ..

the strongest woman
in 9 counties ..

it's all grace,
just grace ..

woke with the thick green cough ..

dropped my lover friend off
at her place,
climbed back into my place ..

went in,
fell asleep on the couch ..

got up
an hour or so later
with a strong pull towards orange juice,
the six
was settling in ..

went to the gas station
around the corner,
pulled out the biggest glass jug
they had
and a packet of 'lil angels'
for
a
stomach thinking about food ..

went to the counter,
the nice Indian man
asked how I was,
'NICE. THANKS.'

Why don't you smile,
he asked.

'YEA. IT'LL HAPPEN TODAY,'
I came back.

He just smiled,
kept looking up at me ..

'NEED A BIT OF THE COFFEE BEFORE SHIT STARTS POPPIN.'
I said.

So, you're feeling bad today. Must have been quite a night. Have some drinks,
he asked.

'YEA. A LITTLE BIT,'
I was waiting to get out.

You should invite me over next time,
he said.

Just smilin'
and smilin' ..

Finally got the receipt,

he smiled again,
gave the wink
and
I walked ..

Drove off thinking about how
I was
going to have a time
with my
juice

and lil' angels ..

11/11 VETERAN

the hell and good times
as
the
Veterans march ..

at the wall,
on the monument,
in the magnifying glass called TV,
through the mailed out government checks
and one
day that is Vonnegut's birthday ..

the US
chance to say
hello and thanks,
it's
the day after they came back on the boat
or
plane to a land
that
is
preaching peace ..

but it's hard to
get sunk into the bones for
these boys
as
they come back from the land
where diplomacy ends and
the
gun starts talkin' ..

this one is for you
and
a silencing of the guns on the streets
as
we
keep on reaching for the dove
flying by over the power line
with the

olive branch in full view
and

the
pasta

boiling
in
the
pan ..

a dead man is found in the YMCA dormitory

after
several talk about excessive heat
and smell
coming from his room ..

the mouthy,
snappy man
who runs the dorms
talked about it with us ..

said
there was no conclusive cause,
he was a big man who wore safari hats and
colorful shirts ..

spent a good portion of the eve
getting all of it cleared up ..

sure,
it's all going down at the YMCA dorms ..

if you want
to get a group of kids from the classroom writing scene
to the real digs,
bring 'em down ..

the boys that burrow in the dwell
have had
a
hand dealt them ..

half smile because they don't know what's going on about them
or they're too fried to care ..

that's nice thing ..

the rest
walk about with visions of the past coming
in like bill collectors who want to start with a cup of tea
and end with a bullet between the unibrow ..

so,
with the world burring with scent of sweat
and the penchant for a good story,
the dorms off 8th Street go back to where they
have always been ..

bringin' them in and out ..

no buzz,
the media doesn't know,
the room is yellowed off
and

the boys go back to the popcorn
ravioli fest in their rooms
that is banned of
booze
and broads ..

life remains there ..

not the same,
it just remains ..

the remainder,
my friends,
is yet to be determined
off
8th
and
downtown ..

a real pisser

the guy with piss pants
sits on the stool
with no more sheets on the wire ..

waiting for the ladies to show
because
he's ready to see if he still has what it takes to
win them
over with a lap
of cold
piss
and
a
heart of conviction
he's
sure the ladies can respect ..

so,
the first victim walks through the door ..

he gets up with two beers
in his hand ..

goes towards her ..

falls down one step from her stool
as
she notices
through her peripheral
the
approach

and
gets a frown on her mouth
because
her free beer just splashed on the ground
and
the man
swiftly forgot about
the
piss soiled on his pants ..

the man stays on the floor
as
the
woman orders a double scotch on the rocks
and
the
bartender
steps

in
to do
the
sweet
talkin'

as
the
bar
flames up to fever
deep
deep
orange
in
the
middle

of
town ..

action at the laundry mat ..

always action ..

if there's ever a public home
of the broken
and waiting to get properly washed up and
rightfully dried,
it's the laundry mat ..

took the Monday off,
loaded the car,
bought some cheerful detergent,
went on up
for some love
there on 39th ..

started throwing my lights in
one,
the darks in the other,
then looked in one and saw it was full of
water ..

murky water with the stink
of former cloth in it's death mouth ..

a
big woman reared out and said,
'IT'S OUT OF ORDER. YOU MAY WANT TO USE ANOTHER.'

I said
I had a feeling ..

so,
on I go with the tossing
and
throwing of detergent ..

then,
I leave with thoughts of 'THE SOUND AND THE FURY'
on my mind ..

been recommended,
finally ready to give that Faulkner fuck a shot ..

so,
by the entrance
there's a little blond woman in an old school long sweater
coat telling an angry,
angry little man
that
it was a shame that his favorite shirt had a stain on it ..

the couple stuck out

like a couple of bloody knuckles in a
peace protest ..

it was clean clear
and I knew her voice was grating on him
like the complaints about
his constant drinking ..

I went across the street
for 'THE SOUND AND THE FURY',
got a meatball sandwich to calm my beating head
and came back to
hear them in the car ..

she yelling
in a broken gray Honda
as he started pumping his fists in violent retort
at her
comment ..

the sound and the fury,
didn't have
to
buy anything ..

it's all in a Monday afternoon
trip

to the laundry mat ..

with the
sound

and
fury
still yelling out front
and

my shit
is
ready to
toss in the dryer ..

AM talk

circles of oil
slicked about the
road,
trickles of water,
the man hole cover is gone,
the last of the albums in the clearance sale sit about
because people have other ways to get their music,
oh cable man flying by,
let the lady on the corner get better reception,
at this point she won't leave her bed and the neighbors
are getting worried,
take care of the worry,
as the black birds swoop down on the cops,
the cops smile because they tend to be the big fat
black birds of our world year round,
so they smile during the winter months when the birds return,
give me a fucking break STOP sign,
I'm not looking at you,
I'm looking at the ONE WAY sign
and we don't have to have another talk about how ridiculous the YIELD sign is
or the MERGE sign,
sure you take the tops when it comes to a succinct sign all can understand,
but you mean STOP,
there's no go in your repertoire,
nothing that indicates motion,
in fact you fuck with people while they have maintained or attained a decent speed
and leap on their destination,
you make them STOP
and you still stand there on the pole smirking
with all you halting shit from going forward,
yet you are the most popular sign out there,
shit,
stop giving GO the bad talk,
he can't defend himself,
plus if there was a sign that was green and said GO,
it would render you helpless,
people would prefer the GO sign,
so be lucky,
you don't have a rival yet,
but we're all pulling for
the day
when we can keep on a GOin
and
stop all this STOPin ..

AMBIGUOUS RAT BASTARD

I was heading towards
the Lincoln memorial ..

quite a walk from the Washington Monument ..

about half ways there,
I saw a man
with a sign draped around him ..

a black man with
some big sunglasses and
a
sign that said ..

'NAACP BLACK BASTARD' ..

I was with a black fellow from the Bronx ..

I looked over at him,
he nodded his head and said,
'I WAS GONNA ASK .. BUT, SHIT, I THOUGHT IT WASN'T GOING TO GET FAR.'

after talkin' about it a bit,
we couldn't figure it out ..

was he shitting on the political system
or the NAACP ..

sometimes

the political agenda,
however hidden or apparently out in the open,
can

be
about
as
subjective

as
a
damn photograph laying errantly on
the
ground ..

Around 1980

hey now,
hey now
how soon we forget
the music
of our generation ..

my bones
are
in 30 now and
the 80's fat has been thoroughly chewed away by
the new Republican machine,
I'm broke
like I was in the 80's when my dad was slinging
leaner notes
and
new features on cars
for
the
chatterin' customers ..

and hey now,
hey now,
how we
have given the music a
seat to be forgotten in
as
that stands as
one of the few things that made us make it through
the
decade and forget the tunes just as quickly ..

those 80's
licks
just
had us
and
they get us in again when we give it a chance ..

the ambush is coming,
ex-girlfriend's laughter in the hallway
and the hallmarks we forgot on lost cards,
we
are

here now to tip this late
cup of hot coffee

to
the
flock
of

fuckin' funny fingers
strumming
those

instruments ..

and
a
hey now,
hey now,
out ..

around the window sill

sounds,
noises,
movement
around

as
the
girl whispers in my ear
if
I'm
ready for the

commitment
that

will change
it

all for
the
both of us ..

all the sounds
and
movements

around
stopped to hear what

my answer was
going
to
be ..

back-up singers

slinging the
doowop
doooooowop - wop - wop - whapp
while

the
cow bell
sounds
and
the drum stick snaps
over
the

skins of an animal
stretched over metal ..

the lead singer
goes on
about
microwaving a burrito
and
deep frying a turkey
as
the
back-up singers
offer a simple doowop
doooowoppppp - wop - wop - wooppp

and
some
cooing ooohhh

oohh
ooooohh
yea
yea ..

the gig
of
a
back up singer ..

they always say
what

we
would like to but
never
can ..

bird scavengers

big fat
nasty
black
plump
beaked
floppy
flappin
eatin
winged
black birds
goin'
over
the
rooftops barely,
nippin'
at
the trash and crumbles of what once used to be food ..

stryrofoam cups in mouth,
bits of plastic,
shit from tomorrow's headline,
the cats
clawing at the window
as
the
birds come flying towards my window ..

closed windows ..

for more
of
the
same
plump
fat
delectable
savory
mouthwatering
shit

you
black birds
and
your plans ..

most folks don't
get you
and
want you gone

I like looking

at
them
trying to fly with their fat,
full bodies
contracted
by

the world of underbirds
I
don't
mind

feeding ..

bit more of the music

too many CD's
and the musicians
that
spit fire
and
gratitude ..

sure I'm an ILLEGAL RIPPER OF MUSIC ..

as the execs make their dimes
and
buy the next pin stripe set of cloths,
the
musician's tour
to get some scratch in their bank account ..

so,
I think I'm going to get some more blanks
to
fire over the fires
of
this ILLEGAL RIPPING OF MUSIC ..

sure,
come over and shackle my hands ..

I'll keep on with it ..

haven't listened to more
good
solid
tunes than
now

with all this ripping in my
ILLEGAL RIPPING CASTLE OF SOUND ..

starting to not trust the music-ians
out there giving
the
fans
shit for ripping their music ..

if it's there,
it's going to be taken ..

just that simple ..

so,
as the record company ponders dropping
that next new

act out there,
I'll be ripping their music
as
another ear to be let to the process ..

isn't it about saturation
and
appreciation ..

now,
let's
move
on

here in this ILLEGAL RIPPING MACHINE
on
down
the
road to the next tasty album
of
choice ..

cat eye pupil

all thin
in the
morning light
where
are
you going to
go
when it gets dark ..

tuck back up
under
the
real ball of sight,
there
cat head

with your
curiosity,
head stuck in the blinds,
more food than the fish,
more access to shit I never hardly see
out of here at work,
the gals
or some other ..

look cat,
you have it made in this joint ..

only for a few sparse months,
kill the cricket,
take down the mouse,
bite me if
the fancy is like a catsup
&

bite me well ..

Chevy Chase, Maryland

I have questions ..

and one wasn't answered on
a recent visit
to DC ..

stayed in a town called Chevy Chase in Maryland ..

asked a number of locals,
checked the web sites,
looked into local history
and
got nothin' ..

in fact,
some said they would look into it
and
I never heard a word back ..

I'm just going to go with it
being
a
place the actor stopped in at some
point
in
his life to ask the same thing
and

get
nothin'

about it ..

not even a history of
his
own name ..

come on down

came in for a bit,
made coffee,
pooped,
pet the cat
and
looked at this computer screen
for a good fight ..

then,
saw the flashing on the answering machine,
not used to much action
with the split of
friends growing up and the girl at
work ..

punched the button
and
heard a good friend from Orange, CA
wanting to talk
and
telling me he's coming to town soon
and
wants some time,
another friend wants
to
give me a calico cat ..

sure,
people are still good deep down ..

they want to talk and
give stuff away without
any strings attached

and
that just makes

sense to me
as
I wonder

what people are up to anymore

as
I keep myself tied to my shoes
and

ready to hand
out
my socks to the next available customer ..

come our way

breed the animals,
corral the herd,
tie up the fleece,
it's time
to get food and
clothing for the cold season ..

with bundled hands
and red ear lobes,
we
walk across the lot to another
pick of the
fancy
as
the
band hits the bridge and crosses
it without thinking about it ..

here we are with a pile of shaved hair,
some fat from the leg chops
and
color in the packaging,
we
need the things
of survival
and
the
things of remembrance
as

the
kids
wrap up middle semester
and
the
adults look towards
the

bonus
of
the
Christmas
season

and
the
reason why we are all still hanging around ..

comfortable

pullin' up
the shades,
lettin' the foreign currency
float
into
the warmth,
cat stretched on back,
Russia gettin' bad mouth for bad gas incident,
they say they amassed 100,000 troops for an Iraq squeamish,
the jury wants the old man to die,
the doctor wants the small child to live,
the weasel wants to pop another top,
the stones are rolling over an illegally copied CD,
the cops are spitting out the window at the waste of tax dollars,
columnists feel they are changing the world
as the writers fail to get read
because we are all lookin' around ..

lookin' at things that don't have to be read
and that can
prologue that odd
feeling
we have
for comfort
at
the
expense of our heads
feeling
more and new stimuli ..

comfort
comfort

&
more comfort ..

devices in a gizmo

feel like
I'm bein' set-up ..

they tell me they don't
like them walkie talkies,
I tell them about the infrastructure ..

they sold tips off that sort of technology
and nod ..

not sayin' a word ..

next day,
they have devised the equivalent of a runnie yellie ..

the upgrade to the
walkie talkie ..

it's cheaper,
smaller,
more sleek
and makes the girls get all full of
pistons and V6 orgasms ..

so,
I say,
what the fuck ..

get no profits,
don't like money that much,
no real thanks ..

so,
i move into the next topic,
lie about the details
and
wait to get the blame
and
a
check from the first invention
for
a little future honesty ..

fall talkin' it out of winter

dainty pieces
of
ground
follow
the
wispy pieces of ground
that

go
around the floor
into
a
ceiling thought ..

sure,
leaves
circling like military marshals on the
field of fall's battle before
negotiating
how winter is going to go down ..

sleet - 7 days
snow - 18 days
below zero - 24 days

no ..

the soldiers say 'no' again ..

that's too much winter
as
the
leaves scurry further down the street
and

the night of thought
starts edging towards war ..

OK,
what do you want?
winter asks ..

fall says
that the 7 days of sleet is too much ..

too damned bad,
winter comes back ..

at this,
all the trees start falling off every tree about,
winds kicking,

trash whirling,
hard to think,
winter asks for fall to quit ..

everything is tranquil ..

and
the
first winter
with
no

sleet
is
around
the
quiet,
quiet
corner ..

former white and pristine

his tore up car
sits on the street ..

like a shining white jewel in
July,
his
karma has caught up to his precious wheels
and
he likely argues up there in the
3rd floor apartment in
the
Montclair
as
the
black man strolls up the block all cool
and
shit

while
the
car darts the wrong way down the one way
and
another does a U-turn in the
intersection ..

then
the
victor comes down the street
with
bags,
trash,
bottles,
papers
pieces of an
old life
in
a
shopping cart
past the white car
on
the
curb ..

that
cart
kills the looks
of
the
locomotive

any

damn

given day here
off
the
hood and
in
the
middle of my own
drawn
paradise lane ..

from the front door

i don't
have to
go far
to see some pretty
deceitful shit
around here,
or the
chance for
some pretty deceitful shit ..

a sunglassed man on a cloudy day
crossing the street with a hammer in
a plastic bag,
a good lookin' Asian woman walkin' alone
towards the scattered street north of here,
the whores walking up the block with a big slit in their dress
and the chewed up little black man leading them to their next oasis
or beating,
the boys selling rocks,
the girls smoking the rocks,
the bare tree branches,
the naked women waiting for anything
but what's going
on around
here
to
take

them away

and everything else
right
along with it ..

getting way back

old dreams,
new songs,
the cat yawns while still asleep
and gets up to stretch
as
the sniper in DC gets busted and
the area is back to whatever
they
want
to
call or quantify
as
'NORMAL' ..

go ahead, HIDE

have a live-in cat
goin' around the house ..

a female calico,
good kid,
though
she hides real well sometimes ..

one night,
a week into the visit,
I couldn't find her anywhere ..

all the closets,
under the couch,
under the bed,
everywhere
and
nothing ..

I even when outside to look thinkin' that
she fell through the screen of a window ..

nowhere ..

so,
I called the gal,
she laughed,
and

just

started
yelling out
to the rabid

dogs
of
the
eve

for a bit of help ..

ham head

it all
comes down
to one kid ..

one ..

not a group,
not 2,
just one ..

have this little piece of digital
photo takin ..

I snap photos of the kids
who come through
and
some of those that don't ..

one kid in
particular,
smiles when talked to
and
looked perplexed when not ..

saw him for a couple of days,
he's a young kid,
comes up with his sister
who doesn't talk to him well at all ..

anyway,
I don't know this kid's name because
his language is so
bungled up,
he's about 11 years old
and
one day I pulled out the camera and
snapped a pic
of his face ..

then,
I showed it to him ..

he beamed ..

beamed like I hadn't seen in a small one
for
a
while ..

'MOR PIKTURE .. MUR .. MUR'

I snapped another one,
he waved to get to the camera
to see
the
pic ..

he did more poses,
I just snapped photos of
the nameless kids face
and
it was the best
thing

in a bit ..

victory for this kid ..

likely hand had pictures taken
much,
let alone seen them ..

he would close his eyes,
flash his hands,
turn sideways for a pose,
over and over,

the kid's moment
strung
together

picture

by
glorious
picture ..

hot nuts

she lies in the sun ..

baking like a piece of sugar dough ..

not sure when to pull her from the pan,
I come up
to pet her and
get my hands on the keys before leaving the place ..

first idea down,
second idea mounting,
third idea eying the first one because
that was the one it wanted originally ..

pet the cat,
she's hot and the shedding is flopping up about the air for the
winter coat to come in ..

I pet
and talk to her face,
she meows and claws my hand hard ..

I toss her out of the sun,
onto the ground ..

she leaves,
shits,
comes back and now she's on
top of the monitor
looking to jump onto a picture on the wall,
if it will hold her ..

she's daydreaming about landing on
her feet,
tail swiping her hair slipping about the air,
slits for eyes

and the third idea has nothing to worry about ..

it is out and down now
as
this
cat sits higher than I
here in
the morning of blowing leaves
raking
the streets ..

in semi-motion

bent legs,
the suburban that won't start
and
the
cold cola in between my palms ..

gotta get these ideas
out as
the man in the broken down suburban
has the hood propped,
white crown victoria in front
ready to jump
and the man pounces around the street
calling
for
a
voice above
to help him get the motor started ..

this,
as the cola stays cold,
my knees straighten a bit
and I hear the song blasting from the fuses that still
work
in this man's suburban ..

it's a Monday
in the hood
and

we
are all seemingly waiting around
for
the
motor
to
start

and
for
the
next story
to
get into full,
fledged
gear ..

knight skins

you think
or might
figure that you have
reached an age
where settlin' down
isn't such a bad option ..

then you hit that falsetto of the head
that keeps the door open just so,
the lid loose on top of the jar,
the elbow straight - stiff
and holding the potential at arms length ..

i wonder with my bones and brain
if it will ever
hit me ..

you know,
to be the settlin' type
or if
my lover will have
to endure a
most pleasurable hell
to crack the code ..

the code of a language
I'm not so sure I could crack if
the
whip came
down on my skins ..

meet me at Jilly's

as
Sinatra sings
another hit
over
and
over
while
the
new rat pack
goes
through the rancid trash bags outside
waiting for the day after the holiday ..

going down to Jilly's to meet the gal
and look at some new shelves
we hung
as
the
local who lives above the place
stops by and talks about his newest tale
of
being a Guatemalan character that takes the sins of their entire year
and
ingest them in happiness on a throne ..

all the smoke,
drink,
pills and more
throughout the night
as
the
naked girls dance around him
and
his smile slowly goes from reserved to
full
repose ..

the week is gone and
he talks about the
bad luck shoveled on his plate ..

he's getting ready to get out of his
expensive pad,
they wrote him up at work,
his girl talks to another man
and
he says that he pushed back the hands of possible suicide
to see
all
three new star wars films ..

clear in thought,
crystal in speech,
Shane tells us of his tales

and
we tell him of ours
as
the
Guatemalan
kids
run past the patron saint
of
sin

and wonder which one they will
visit him with in the next 20 years
as
we spend our
days

picking up the vices
and
pawning them off
on
our own dime store
version of
sin for sale
and
sin for

exchange

as
we wait to meet
at
Jilly's again ..

and
again
down
there
at
the
bar
off
KC's
dirty streets
of

a song's history ..

Monday

the daylong headache
and
a
good
fuckin' nap at twilight ..

colors changing through the blinds,
the book knocked my eyes loose
and
the
violin string snapped in my hands
as
the
drum sticks wait to split the skins
and
comfortable dreams
come sifting through my ears and out my
cerebellum ..

a twilight sleep full of hunger
and
thoughts
of
something brewing in the streets,
but it will have to
wait to be heard

when this
kid wakes up free of head pain
and
something

to be
reported
on
the
head wire ..

**morning of the first snow
2002**

she
had a big,
wide
smile pulling
through the shifting 1st snow of
the year ..

on a big bike
with a yellow plastic carrier,
with plastic windows,
was being dragged behind ..

she lodged the front tire
into the rack,
looked through the window at the line
of mouths waiting for
hot beverages,
snow skipping over the indoor soundtrack,
she looked back at her yellow basket in back,
unzipped it,
though a squirrel or farrut was gonna
flop out ..

no,
she lifted a regular 3-year old sized
kid,
he ambled up the street,
she zipped the carrier back up
and

by
all
I
just saw
there
I

think this
whole snow season
is
off

to
the
right sort of
walk ..

need to find a couple more ways to get a day off ..

had a few off
this week,
had to go back in
on the Friday ..

my days ran loose
and
I looked fondly like a summer on the beach
in
some greasy Hollywood moment ..

with my
shovel,
hammer,
axe
and
such ready and
poised for unearthing,
I'm looking
for
some

days
to wake when I want,
flop about like a vandal
and
have
some
general abandon

as
the days are
full of more days

and
I want to
find some more to cut free from the workplace ..

if you
find
any,
respond
to
this ad ..

I'll take 'em and
give you what I have ..

some old vinyl,
pasta sauce,
good socks,
old watches that work well,
a wall map of the world,

purified water,
or
good deals in the mailbox ..

just slip them under the door or
in
the
mailbox

I'll find 'em
and

send you a post card

from
where I'm at ..

never-ending television

the angry white man with
his white car
across the way
in
his 3rd floor dwell,
has that big screen TV on constantly ..

his girlfriend,
and
dog
have
to endure it ..

the thing is never off ..

at all hours of the day
and
night
and
afternoon
and
morning
it's flickering
like
a
candle looking
for
some better air ..

sure,
they don't look as though they work
and
it's
sad

to imagine that
all
that
brain juice is being sucked into the electric box ..

&
when he comes outside and punches the alarm system off
and
on
and
off
and
on
and
off

and
on

his headlights flicker
like the
TV above
in
the

3rd floor apartment

that would probably fold up like a disgruntled union
if
it
was ever to be turned off ..

that
poor dog
and

girl
as
the
headlights

again

flick
on
off
on
off
off

off
off ..

old and young familiar faces

crawling up cold pavement,
bare trees have opened a view
to Main Street
and
the afternoon bars ..

the music clubs
and
the
people that crawl along looking for more action ..

all bored on the tip of
clawing
and

more action
as
the cat continues to claw for the outside world of new air
and
this cigarette goes down with ease
while the coffee gets colder
and
I again try it over my lips to see
if
it
somehow magically turned a curve
and
went back to warm ..

the music
I have heard once before
and
the
phone that looks down the barrel of people I once
used
to
talk to
in person,
the
reps are taking a vacation
and
there are more credit cards out there beings
spent today than any other day of the year

which makes me want to stick more ..

stick to dreams
of
making
just enough

to make
it

while the world
economy
hangs like a crystal globe
on

that
green,
full

tree of desire ..

one more juice

the smooove man in
the jazz band crawled up
and
sang the tune,
blew the horn ..

as the crowd cheered him
on in the end,
he said
that he was a part of 'NAPP'
the 'NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POOR PEOPLE'
he
needed all the donations we could give ..

he weaved a bit,
looked in the for queue on the next turn,
then turned back to my lover and
asked her to order him an orange juice ..

she did ..

got the drink and laid it down on the table next to him ..

he blew the horn,
held that red microphone to his lips like
it was a hot little boob
he was looking forward to inspect in the afterglow of a
good set with the boys ..

up there in his 60's,
he looks like
he's still trying to figure out the rest of the female anatomy,
though he has the boob figured out ..

the song ends,
he doesn't look over at the juice
and
goes up to order another ..

lookin' out for the poor folk,
wettin' the whistle for the next tune
and
just itchin' to sit back in a booth
and
sweet talk some sweet women ..

his name is duck ..

though,
his voice echoes
and

the
people look in on a legend
that will
be forgotten in
the
national papers,
though will live on in local lore

living on with that
neglected glass of orange
pulp
that
collects in the bottom
of his cup
into a mountain of
pure
fucking
goodness ..

painting the road that day

on the approach
to the stop light
I saw the highway paint truck in front
of me ..

it had one lit up line ..

so,
I took the right lane ..

I looked around,
over
and forward ..

the light turned green
and the truck took a big left U turn
and
smashed the front of my car ..

I honked ..

no response ..

so I did a U-turn and
went after the guy,
speeding up behind him,
we were on the highway and I didn't know when it was
going to end ..

these guys aren't joy riding ..

they're painting the road ..

so I tailed him,
turned onto 12th St. downtown,
back around and on the highway
towards the other side of the river ..

close on the tail as the line blinked
blink
blink ..

got up behind him
as his buddy in front started laying down lines and
the right arrow started blinking ..

I followed
and
the truck finally got some time
to turn into a street and begin the sweep
as

I pulled the car directly in front of his car ..

I hopped out
and
asked 'WHAT AND WHY?'

the guy was good natured,
said he didn't hear a thing
and
as we waited for the highway patrolman to arrive
he told me the big
yellow trailer on the back of the truck was
called a 'CAUTION WRECK BARRIER'

couldn't be anymore ironic ..

so I exchanged the information,
used a phone from his supervisor,
talked to the big patrolman,
thought about some more fluids
and
off

to the next

accident that was
bound
to

happen in this little red jetsetter
of
mine ..

rid the piss

man in a red car,
tie,
nice coat,
buttoned up shirt,
those turtle shell glasses,
tight rim hair cut,
pulls up behind my car
on the street ..

dirty red car,
dangling front light,
stained moon roof,
sticker tags still in tact,
he stands there looking at the
house across the street ..

a yellow
one ..

back facing my white house ..

he looks forward,
then looks around,
then down,
does his thing for
a
bit ..

a bit longer ..

a bit longer then ..

as the 80's music rolls
from The Cars
and
he looks behind one more time ..

zips up,
gets in his car,
drives off quickly ..

goes through the stop sign
and
off
to
the
next bar ..

one solid piss on a city
street

as
the
wet pool
stays shimmering
there

behind my
car

as
the
Car's sing about
my best friend's girlfriend

and

zips it up again ..

Ryan's Poem

went on out for a Saturday afternoon
matinee
on
a
gray day ..

good breakfast,
the day trip to a German town about 3 hours out of town was nixed
because
we
were going to get a late start ..

so,
we stayed in town,
got some drink
and
went to a movie ..

with my lover,
a couple and
a
cat that has a real penchant for the danger and the bottle ..

sat through a bad film
with a British tough guy ..

movie got so bad
the gal and I couldn't stop laughing at the
way the plot was moving along ..

so,
as we were leaving,
feeling the pockets for a cigarette,
the
man
with a penchant for booze
took out a smoke and lit up inside the theater on the way out ..

some laughs,
though he was straight faced talking about how bad the film was
when
a
timid black girl asked him to put it out ..

he inhaled,
exhaled,
looked over,
still in motion
and
said,
'WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT?'

she didn't say anything as I passed,
some steps behind,
but
I heard her say,
'YOU BETTER PUT IT OUT .. '

we passed through some doors,
a security guard was at the top of the escalators
as
the
cigarette remained hidden well
and
we walked back out
into

the
gray sunshine
as

the most innocent
of
villains

anywhere around ..

saturday bath

i loved her,
but she had somewheres else
to be ..

wanted to hold her,
though there was nothing to
hold on to ..

would have talked to her more,
but all she said was that someone before me made off
with her hearing and didn't bring it back ..

told her i would be willin' to wait
some and she said that people wait for the bus,
not on somethin' like she has ..

asked her if she wanted a piece of my sandwich
and she said she doesn't eat pieces,
she wants the whole damn thing ..

so,
when i knew i was out,
against the wall,
done ..

offered her
cab's fare to where she was going
and
she
said
that she would rater walk

walk on,
young girl ..

she's the sun in mercury's eye

the best lookin' little black girl
in
the world
clings to my locks ..

she's always there
behind me
yelling my name ..

ready for some
times
and
smiling like a princess the
old
novels of lore
haven't had
a
chance to pick up ..

here name is Brymanni
and
the kids call her 'MANNI' ..

the best lookin' little kid in
the
world ..

the mother looks miserable
and
says that she hides her nastiness
when
other is around ..

have a hard time believin' it,
though
the
best stories told are those that we don't expect ..

but either or,
Brymanni
takes

the
cake,
knife,
plate
and
leftovers
as

the
kid

with the
best face
around ..

shoot the shooter

was sittin' in the cab
with the driver
who was likely from Nigeria
or such
while the boys
were getting some cash from the machine ..

so,
we start talking about this sniper running around the county we're in,
Montgomery,
takin' innocent from
the
world ..

I ask him who he
thinks it is and why it's so hard for the local
police
to
get their hands around this cat ..

he says that he's not scared
and
that it's likely a former military man
with his accuracy
and
clean get-aways ..

in retrospect,
he was right ..

leave it to the cab drivers
to know the digs
on
most anything ..

sure
they play trivial pursuit in the station
before

shifts
begin

or
to

kill
the
time dead
while

await
wait
waitin' ..
around

**SITTIN' IN THE BACK OF THE PLANE
LOOKIN' AROUND**

old man reads the paper ..

hunched over to the side,
light on above,
far sighted glasses thick on the nose,
readin' the god damned college football scores,
highlights,
stat sheet as the little blond woman with her husband
directly behind
reads a section titled away from me ..

though,
the world 'QUESTIONS' comes glarin' out ..

sure,
the old man has about as many questions as
the rest of us and as he reads the caption of how 'MISSISSIPPI STUNNED FLORIDA'
bet you a dime over a nickel he would love
to have a good solid hand job thrown on him by the blond behind ..

she's proper,
just tuggin' on a bottle of water .. wet lips,
muscles going through lips .. relaxed eyes ..

yea pops
do the scores mean that much more
than
the
real questions?

small, tiny instances

fingerprints in the soil,
new breath on winter's cold window,
some toilet paper floating in the stool,
cigarette butts left in the tray,
toe nails on the kitchen floor,
we
are bound to leave behind what
we don't expect

as
the
crime lab cracks the new case
and
we explore the obvious ..

yet,
we have a way of looking past or
objectifying the obvious ..

so when you wrap
the mouth,
fingers,
legs,
nails,
groin,
hair
and
chest around
the
moment

know that it is being left
behind

for
all of us

to
investigate

in
our
little
counting
philosophy

and
where we are and what
we have been ..

some luck

she had some nasty luck
lately ..

a good friend of her's
hung himself several weeks prior ..

she was getting ready to move into my lover's home with her
dog and three cat's ..

the last night in here place,
she went against her inner urging and
let the cats out of the house
to roam ..

early the next day,
she saw a cat that looked like one of hers
dead in the middle of the road ..

she looked at it,
picked it up
and
took it back to her place
thinking it was her own ..

on further inspection
it wasn't hers
and
she buried it ..

said that if it was her
she would have went insane ..

a mental hospital likely ..

though,
she's a good gal and shouldered her human responsibility
to bury the cat
as
hers
frolic about
now

and
the world

can be a little safer

without
another
getting admitted into

the
big
ambiguous home
on
the
corner ..

SOMEHOW HAROLD KNEW

on the shitter
now
is
a
book I'm chipping
away at called
'ESP'
by
a
guy named Harold S. ..

he has
all the times he's averted danger
by
tapping into the depths of unused mind
and
how he communicates with
others
continents wide ..

sure,
some of it has hatched some crazy
premonitory
jive
that either happened before
or
I'm noticing now
and

Harold S.
keeps on talking
to
me over every piss
and
good sit on the pot ..

the man
is
probably out there
charting my walk to
the
bathroom
or
knows
that I'm shitting all over the place
in
the
discourse of his work ..

sure

Harold,
you probably know this is being written
now

but
I'm doing it just
in
case
you

had a breakdown in that ESP
you
talk about ..