



Joefiles 122:
swishes of helicopter blades silently lift us away

A ROMAN DREAM

i want
to
eventually
walk my
family down
the
streets of rome
just
meandering with
nothing much
to worry over
as the sounds
of the world
penetrate us
all at the same rate,
yet get grinded
out in a way that
will define what we
all are and
how far we
have
come in
our
lives
that
eventually
lead
to
the
finest city
on
earth.

all the damn karma

the best
thing
i can
tell
myself
sometimes
when
i
try
to fund a family,
raise children
and keep
from being
sad about not
being with my
wife much,
i realize that
the collective
reasoning
of my accumulated
karma is
really
going to be
the meaning
behind the way
my
life
will
eventually
turn out
when
the
hammer of
justice
cracks
the
glass
protecting
all of
our
skins.

Belton Wal-Mart

a big,
over-weight
intent man with
a tight yellow shirt
sporting an ad for
a food product
that is not in existence anymore
and large eagle scout shorts
came meandering out of the
wal-mart bathroom
on the coldest day of
the year.

temperatures were in the negative 1 to 5 degrees,
as he ambled down the check out lines towards the
front door and whatever reason
got him out of his home and
into the public to get
what was needed to
make him live
fully into the next moment.

and as he
skimmed on down the line,
the gaunt,
tired,
rural faces of
folks that I could never fictionalize
in a story
or poem,
hang with
their goods
and a line
of expanding credit
to buy them.

and with this,
i load my boy up into the cart
as the cashier flashes her big smile
with several badly rotted teeth in front
and while my boy waves
and i smile,
the big eagle scout kid
stares my way

locking my gaze,
and not letting loose
as i take the 90 degree turn
towards the stark cold
dusk of the ending day
wanting to turn around
and flash this man a thumbs up
as his skins begins to
prickle in mysterious
pin pricks
as the cold
creeps further
and further
into
all of us.

bird ghosts

every day
i see the ghost
and shadow of my
father's physical memory
in all the hawks,
vultures,
sparrows,
errant cranes
and geese
that
flip
and
scoot
like
known math facts through
the sky
and
the
very real
notion
that the only
person
in charge
of my grief
management
is me
in
all
my
tidings of
fantasy and
fiction wrapped into
the impossibly
fast pulsing
of
just on
of those tiny
bird
hearts.

boiling cold

i'm not
the sort of
mediterranean soul
that enjoys the
constant,
nagging cold.

but,
those days when the cold
burns the flesh,
makes you emit a
surprised cough
and pounds the wet in your
eye balls in a way that
nothing can,
i feel alive.

i stare at the stillness
of stunned trees,
lifeless mailboxes,
twinkling front porch lights
that hasn't been shut off
since last nights bright party,
and i wonder if birds fly on purpose
to ensure they don't freeze.

and it's on these days
that i understand how hot
the heat can get on the sun
that bales down
upon my nose
doing absolutely not
good other than allowing me
to see the enormous billows of
human smoke mist
hurtling out of my mouth
as though
i'm heating
a home
with just
the
warmth of
my
thought.

curled snarls of yesterday

leave
when miles
smiles again
and forgets
that
tantrums
exist ..

and at once,
we can pet the
cacoons that
shaped us
and whistle
a
sheaf of notes
worthy
of
the greek god
window in the sky
to crack open
and take
in
the
savory goodness
of
our music ..

sweet music
of miles.

damned reunions

lately,
technology
has
rammed me into
the high school reunion
and rendezvous
that i never
wanted to hop on.

faces,
voices,
old memories,
lost flames,
new images of all
those folks
are flitting over
my skull
and again
they are going
to go into
the 'eventually to forget'
folder in my brain.

sometimes i want to
stick around when history
decides to write it's
farewell,
many other times
i'm ready to move on forward
and leave
that train depot to do
what it wants and where it wants
without my knowledge.

so,
hopefully i can enjoy
my recent bout of technological
silence from those voices in the past
that sleep comfortably
in a bed made of
thousands of squiggly
zeros and ones
ready to again be release
to see if there are any more

zero's and one's to be
rubbed up against
as my
quest hi-tech
existential quest
for the number
two
plunges forward.

dental jive

i have always
relished
giving shit
to the dental hygienists
throughout the years.

each one
has had that easy,
warm stride about life
and expect each patient to
be obedient
statues that
politely rush through
an x-ray or mouth cleaning.

instead,
i begin tossing out
the best of my bullshit
and they hand their limp hands with
expensive equipment to forget what
they were doing as they answer
a question about green beans
or how the tallest basketball on earth
could fit in
a regular dental chair.

and as they begin to laugh more,
water flies from cleaning implements
and the big doctor is waiting to make his
entrance.

upon entering,
the dental assistant lingers
and nervously laughs as i pound
the dentist with the best of my bullshit
and how we should really live our lives
backwards and send old men to war.

at this,
the big dentist gets as wrapped in
as the assistants.

then suddenly,
we are all rushing to end our

small smatterings of talk
because
we realize we could be scaring the other
patients
and the amount of time that has
lapsed is unsafe for all involved.

i love all those dental
pals of mine.

eventually

i

think

i

will

forget

everything

and

when

that

day

comes,

i'm

going

to

long

for

what

it

was

to

remember

everything

i

have

to

remember

all

the

damn

time.

fictional battles on the horizon

the tiny water
towers
on the
distant horizon
look like
creatures
from
the war of the worlds
ready to
attack the
restless
heart of
america as
the pulsing american
flag waves in
brave anticipation
of the oncoming danger
as the silent,
majestic trees
hold steady
like captivated
audience members to see
what will happen next
as i
wonder if i should
look on and see
the destruction of
the innocence
or turn away and
begin
fighting
for
what i know
is
right,
just
and
fictionally
justifiable.

‘h’

i have finally
embraced
the adult-onset
hemorrhoid
on my person
by giving it
a name.

todd blaine.

i have never known
a todd or a blaine
be much of a happy
creature.

both of those kinds
of people with those
parental given names
actually
act
itchy,
inflamed,
angered,
rude,
resistant
and nagging
in all their tiny
and huge
movements.

so,
i figured the dual first name
nature of this angry growth
would mimic that name
of a politician
that
really
gets on your ass
and won't
let loose no matter
how
many
times you move
to shake

the
little
todd blaine moment.

hot searing suckles

of
truth
my
hurtle
down your
well-crafted
road
and no
matter
how
hard
your frost
is
stuck to the
time
tested notions
that work in
your brain,
you
better
prepare
yourself
for the
lilting
thaw
and the
new direction
your
brain
is
going
to
gloriously
meander.

human ornaments

during the winter
holiday
months around these spots,
i see human made
ornaments huffing
into the night air.

everyone around us
has the smoking habit
and at night
they sit on
their cold tiny
concrete porches sucking
the best of the leaf
as their tiny orange cherries
veer high and low
as extra christmas ornaments
burning into night.

then,
the tiny tufts of smoke like
a train full of toys coming down
to save our hearts from our lungs.

then,
in unison,
the front door sways open
with a spill of fresh, yellow light
before closing once more
on our own
rural neighborhood
version of broadway
sucking
into an
eye ball
near
you.

hummingbird

my
father
in
the early
september air
finally
turned into
the tiny
humming bird
he always
was captivated by ..

he's so small
you can't
see him,
and he's
so far
away
this
utterance
my
sound like
something
so far fetched
that
it
just
may
be
true.

LONELY

when
thoughts
of
being
alone
in
anything
you
may
feel
alone
about
and
as
far
down
as you
go
and
as
bad as your
heart
pangs
with
the odor
of being
alive,
remember
that
at any
given
moment
on earth
as a collective
of
humans,
we are
all
ultimately
in
this fucking
thing
together.

MODERN DAY POLITICAL TRUISM

i love
it when
those
angered,
cookie-cutter
republicans
spout in
their own unique
blend of
'poor sporty-ness'
that
obama is
the black messiah.

'cause it only
compounds their
real
theological quagmire
that leads them down
such a narrow,
unenlightened path
providing little
growth or
insight into
this huge
world full of
so many varying views.

and it's this:
jesus was really a black
man
and obama will
end up being the only
real honest president we
are fortunate to ever have
as he rolls up his proverbial sleeves
to clean the mess of the
former white dude
that apparently felt so
good about the messiah
that he
fucked
our
world

up beyond
normal repair.

amen.

musing on high

i have
found
that
all
my
attic
rumblings
and
musings
may
get
my
closest
secrets
nearer to
god's
ear.

night lids

i try
to avoid
focusing
on my own life
when my
heavy lids
of a day
lived finally
begin to
fall with the
dark fog
cloud of night
when our boy
is finally
serene quiet
and the
echoed rumors
of cold
become something
of a funny fictitious
backdrop
to what
i
may
sprout
in some
dotting dream
that will
mean everything,
and be forgotten
immediately
when
i wake
and
have to think
about
my
things
again.

no matter

how many things

i do,

accomplish,

toil over,

think about,

attempt,

fail,

succeed

or simply

brush up against,

my wife

is going

to

be

the

only

human

on

this

enormous plant of

ours that

will ever

know

who

i

really

am

and

she'll

be the only

one

that

i

will

love

the way

i

know

i

can.

on this last day of bush's presidency

in the cold,
sunshine
of january
i believe
i would
be a real
fool
if
history
finally
does
vindicate
this
man of all
the harsh
slaps
he has put
on
everyone
of us voters
that
just wanted
our democracy
to
stroke
us gently
like a
lost
cat
on a warm
winter
couch.

On Tuesday 1.20.09

america
will
finally
get
the
moment,
person,
promise,
ruler,
notion,
re-birth,
calm,
strength
and future
we have
all
been
fucking
searching for
during the
last eight
years
in
an
impossibly
dark
room
with
a
barely
audible
man
fumbling
over
all of
his
words
while
the
sound of
sweat bombs
thud
against
the
ground

and
pennies
clank
on
the
lost
wood
floors
that
will
soon be found
once
again.

piss wood

every home
or apartment i have
ever inhabited
has had a
bad creaking plank
of wood by
the toilet.

and each time i start to
lean a bit too much to
the left,
or right,
i'm reminded
that my fractured
engineering
is reminding me to
straighten
up a bit
so that i don't
mis-fire and
make that
piece of rotten
wood
worse
to the point that
i might fall through
the ground
and wake with
a faint memory
of knocking on wood
before i
ever
entered
that
piss stained
bathroom.

please
don't
punch
my
soup!

there's
nothing
sadder
than
a
bruised,
open
face
of
minestrone
soup.

re-invention

the best
idea
sometimes
is
to
re-invent
your world.

sure,
you may miss some
old memories gone
or ways that
used to
bring some
unknowing soul
a bit of
fleeting joy,
but you have
to take yourself to
the cleaners sometimes.

and when that happens,
all those items of
lore will go through the
washer,
get dried,
and become just one of those
tiny moments that were worth forgetting.

so,
when that girl you had a crush on
comes back years later to tell you
that she was not nice,
you smile,
and suddenly remember what
you had once re-invented,
because today is
much better than that
one day worth forgetting.

and as the tired sun goes up
and down in the moon's relentless shadow,
i love the notion the darwin
helped us all understand

that evolution is forgetting
as brilliance
is trying.

RIP OFF

when your
poor or strapped to
a budget,
everything begins
to become a rip off.

from the rising cost
of goods,
the quality is
what takes a real hit.

there is something
in the quality of
expensive things.

the low rent toilet
paper becomes a
real drag,
cheap plastic hangers
snag on once clean cloth,
the taste of low rent coffee
is a sin,
the gag reflex in cheap
whiskey is a punishment
and the cat gets sick
when there isn't decent
food to fan their
9 fires.

so,
to keep our sanity
straight and narrow,
we
wait until we
can get a step up from
the bottom
and wonder
how
we did it
all the time
with the
last of
the barrel
and

the
cheapest stop
to the top.

SAVING

i'm
beginning
to
realize
what
is
really
wrong
with
me
as
i
itch
my
armpit,
know
over
my
hot
coffee
and
fart
as
i
cough
over
some
oddly
funny
thought
from
earlier
on
and
realize
that
i
may
not
be
able
to
save
you.

SEMI-ALIEN

i would always
love my perpetual backdrop
to be the stars
and swirling earth
in the backdrop
because
i don't feel like
i'm an alien,
yet i feel disconnected from the folks
down here
the every once in a while
make me feel like
i may just belong.

but,
i feel better
mingling in space air,
dreaming of weightlessness
and looking in
to see if that
hurricane will go off course
and marvel at
how many comets into our
atmosphere we are saved
from as the big,
blue
smile of
mother nature looks back
in that maternal glow
that makes me feel
right about my
semi-alieness
out here.

SILENT JESUS

the other
day,
a mailman
that has
been hailed
as
crazy by
a
crazy female
co-worker
slipped a note
under my
windshield wiper,
and i caught him doing this.

he's a fellow
that wears shorts no
matter how cold
it gets outside
and walks like
a
power strider in
a richard simmons
fitness tape.

as i went out to
ask him what he
was putting under my
wiper,
he said,
'oh hey, man. your
tags are expired.'

at this,
i thanked him and remembered
that there was some
event that precluded me
from getting them
renewed on time
and i
immediately felt renewed
by
this man.

and i wonder
if this
fellow may
have
really
be the
true
and frank
jesus
we hear about all
the
time.

slow motion view

sometimes
in the target
i see everything in
slow motion.

folks
casually strolling
into the electronics aisle
with ease.

a mother
and daughter combo
serenely sipping
on an expensive latte
as they look over the discount
pink hat sale.

and
all the other men,
women,
children,
infants
and employees
stride from step to
step
and aisle to aisle
as if everything is
always going to be in
slow motion.

then,
i hear my 4-year old
miles scream
as loud as he can because
a yo gabba gabba cartoon
figure just ran over his brain and he
wants to run towards the toys in a
sheer of pure adrenalized energy
to catch that thought ..

as i explain that we need
to be patient,
he lunges his body in a gulf
of raw catapult to grab

a tub of honey off the grocery
shelf as he says,
'boo...booo' loudly
at a blue package just next
to the honey.

i'm not sure at this point
if anyone is staring on in,
but i wouldn't because i gave
that up months and months back
as we tear through our
store experience in super
charged caffeinated speed
while
all the
human slowness
trickles around us
almost as if
this saturday is going
to turn into a
zombie
matinee.

son talk

in
almost
four
years
i
have
not
had
one
verbal
chat
with
my
boy
miles
but
i
fell
like
i
communicate
with
more
and
better
than
i
have
most
folks
that
i
have
verbally
spoken
with
for
my
entire
life.

stop worrying

about
the
origin
of all
those plump
eggs your
going to
heat up
for
that salad
you
want
so
badly
because
the
devil
just
fled the
room
with
your
delicious,
unforgettable
pot
of
stew.

temperamental poem

our 4-year old
miles boy
is beginning
a dark descent into
that horrible
italian temper i
always feared since
he was a little
potato
tater tot.

and now that his
maturated potato
meet has met
the horror
known as temper,
destruction of toys,
self-mutilation,
i find that i have
lost my temper
and anger as
i wheel around the
heel is tiny,
infant soul
unaware of
what i know.

so,
when his rage snaps
the celery sticks
in half and
the finely manicured
notion of patience
becomes the most
impossible task
in my entire world,
i have to
be the best
that no one prepared me
to be.

and when that
'best' comes,
i may call that

my defining moment
as every other moment
around me reminds
me of a movie
i didn't sign up to
be in ,
but know that the only
escape is to act
the performance of a
lifetime
without
a
single
chance that
a crowd will even
care.

but
the future
will be a bit
brighter
and
isn't
that
what all us little
chickens are trying
to
do
down
here
before
that large,
musty red curtain
comes crashing down
to end our
passions.

THE BANE OF AGE

i'm not sure
what day
or year
or time
it
happened,
but i'm beginning
to
look gaunt
and old.

my feet hurt,
my ass hurts,
odd pains jolt my arms
and my heart
tingles
during intense moments
of parenting.

it reminds me of that
photo of a president
the first day they are in office
and their portrait when they leave.

pounded by worry,
they develop bags under eyes,
gray hair,
sunken skin,
youth gone,
their galore is
transformed into
a wise old man looking
for a good home to retire in.

i used to feel like
i was that kid
with the youthful face
that may stay that way for many
more years past now,

but,
i have downshifted into
a whole new era of feeling
like i need to embrace age

and the wisdom of
staying in that zone of health.

so,
i can finally relate to the old
man in the moon
with his tired eyes
and hopeful grin
as the rest of my day
looks bathed in moonlight
and as restive
as anything is ever
going
to
become.

the best peace

i

can give

my

soul

in

this 4 p.m.

hour of

sunday

soon

sun

setting

with

tiny

tornado of miles

asleep is the

tiny

pangs of jazz piano

and plucks of upright bass

as the engines blare

barely audibly in the distant

past

and the reflections

of birds at the feeder rapping

invisibly against the

tan carpeting

as the dark brown

coffee goes lukewarm

down

my

fully contented

body.

the dark magic

in

my simple

afternoon

coffee mug

is enough

to give

me

the gumption

to forget

what is

wrong

and

smile

about

what

i

think may

just be fucking right

about

mixing

a bit of sugar

into hot,

vaporized

liquid

that

will

give me

everything

i allow it

to.

THE END

tomorrow
is
bush's
last
day
in
office
and
it's appropriate
that
it's
martin luther king jr.
day
as this
country collectively
holds their breath for
the
end of
the
burning bush
and
the
beginning
of
the
first
black
president
ever.

the frozen suburban pools

sit erect

in

memories of

shimmering

blue

and the

distant

echoes of

folks forgetting

their worries

waft about

as the

hot smoke pour

from roof spouts

letting

out the plans for the coming

spring

when

the suburbanites

will again

rule

the world

until summer comes

along and

the big

A/C units

will

start whispering

the same kind

of musings

the

frozen

pools

have

since

forgotten.

the holy indignation

in
everything
that
will
eventually
kill
you
resides in
the
genius
that
we are
all
in
the
same
boat
and
at
the
end of
the
day
what
matters
the
most
is
how
well
your
rode
that
snarling
fucking
bull
that
wanted
nothing
more
than
to
gore
your
body

open
as
your
soul
soared.

the UPS dudes

are
always
in a hurry
in their brown
cloth
running
from home to home,
tearing ass up the street,
honking
in anticipation
or dropping your
package off at
the neighbor's house
because
you were not home.

these guys
have to
wolf down their
food,
gobble drinks
like marines
and fuck like
rabbits
when their UPS hours are done.

these guys may have been
the spirit that built
the pyramids and everything
else that had a rushed timetable
and
withstood
the good,
quality
test
of
time.

the zen of lawn art

our 10-year
zen was left
to his own
calculation of
design when he
set off
to mow the lawn
one errant
summer day.

i left to run an
errand and came back
a long while later
to see an elaborate design
etched into the
front lawn.

there were lines,
arcs,
circles,
parallelograms
and the like.

when i asked him
what the hell was the story,
he said that he was just
day dreaming.

then,
i pulled up and dropped it
because i knew
he was only following in
our families creative
footsteps and creating something
artistically organic
that wouldn't take up space and
spruce
the front up
a bit.

he eventually
cut all the grass,
but i later congratulated
him on making

the front
an
origami of wonder.

he just smiled and nodded his
head in agreement.

it's just his way.

theological northwestern forecast

god
is
always
crying
over
the
low
lying,
fluttered
clouds
of
seattle.

tomorrow

will

become

me

if

i

let

yesterday

remain

you.

TRUE INSANITY

i don't
understand
why
the insanity
plea
is
a
universal get
out of jail
free card
for many hardened
criminals
when
most of the
folks
i
run into
at the
wal-mart
or
dmv
are
completely
inane in
ways that
should prohibit
most of
them from
driving or
spending
any amount
of
money.

true responsibility

the
most
responsible
poetry
i
have
ever
read
is
the
most
irresponsible
plunge
of
memorable
words
i
could
ever
imagine.

what we need or want?

if there
was no
more
pain
and
nothing
but
pure
joy
in
this
world
would
you
have
a
job,
a life,
a vision
or
tomorrow
or
is
that
what
yearning
in
a
reality
of
both
pleasure and pain
is
ultimately
all about?