



**Rock
The
Highway ..
Ride
The
Road**

Rowing down the right side of the river watching her spit float on past towards some damn or fleck of space ..

* *

Too much fun in the world was the way it was designed to be ..

* *

A cathartic bridge to the other side is just one way of seeing the same view in a different pair of shoes on the same side of the bridge you're wanting to leave ..

* *

Didn't remember the dreams last night .. if there were any .. yet, I remember exactly how the street looked from the window once the alarm ripped me from the covers ..

* *

People moving to other states, having kids, buying houses, getting new cars, the new jobs .. growing up is a damn good relative term .. I'm waiting for the lease to run out in this apartment for a new flat .. enough money for essentials .. like shoes, foods, paints and such .. even another state to sink my bones into here in a year or two .. I'm thinking about growing up .. but the relative meter will keep me held back as I head towards thirty and another sip from this mug of hot drink .. shit, I may even get a job .. growing up? Or just getting a year older? You decide and I'll stick with my decision ..

* *

Ways of the world, way of the flower, way of the cat, way of the wafting smoke, way of song going into an album, way of the duck quaking at dark, way of the mule kicking a jackass, way of the tempo going into heat, way of the talk show going into extinction, way of the news going through Jerusalem, way of the Holy reading another book, way of the morning and that's where we stand now ..

* *

Rejection slips are saved the same way as accepted poems into publication .. just a matter of perspective, baby ..

* *

the same is repetitive,
where new is not normal
anymore ..

* *

looking for a new job is like shopping for a new car .. is the payment plan going to be worth it as the months wear on .. and how will this full coverage insurance pan out?

**

getting love for the holes
you draw
and
getting
grief for the
lines
you
forgot to erase ..

**

take the unsmoked
smoke
for
all the
questions
you
forgot to ask
or
the
feelings
they say you neglected
to
feel ..

**

right side
over
the left
and
the top over
the

next option ..

**

the last flame
from a lighter
is
like seeing her
walk
on
the
sidewalk
while
you stand high above
and

dream for a bit ..

* *

the allegory swept the innuendo off its feet ..

* *

study the mechanics of writing .. how the fuck did Hemmingway have the grasp? born with it or luck with a talent for it .. sure, study the language, mechanics, grammatical modifiers, dangling adverbs and the balloon stuck on the overhead electrical line .. open your mouth to the rain .. brush your teeth in it .. go out and shower in it once it starts coming down good and heavy .. listen to the lost civilizations as we lose the grasp we have on our own .. is America Rome and did Rome ever consider they would have something called 'fast food' in a land of lazy waltzes and good, slow cooked food ..

so, do you listen to anybody .. that's quite a voice you have .. did you hear mine? do the poets even listen to anyone? audience, civilians, family, passers-by .. do they hear any of it or do they just wait to hear the response of the reader or passer-by that caught a snip of the word and understood the gist in their own way .. shit, do most people really listen to others much anymore .. we're constantly talking .. mouths work like drill sergeants .. but how about those ears .. need Q-tips or do we need something worth listening to?

grade school kids and junior high kids, shit even high school kids, have some goofy fucking habits about them .. scheming and dodging the arrow of law or a good ass beating .. are they going to start stealing our coffee? they've cornered the shoes, lunch money, coats, wallet and other valuables .. is it time they get strung out on their first drug and rob the older world for their drink .. look, I'm waiting with a shaken up can of soda and a mouthful of words for the punk that comes by looking defiantly at the slivers of mist coming up from my mug of love ..

cramming the lights in their sockets out because I want night to come back down my alley .. then, the crowd starts flicking their lighters as the animal world wonders what kind of bullshit we are going to do next .. speaking of the animal world .. if we could get them to speak or somehow record measurable brain waves/activity of a devoted dog or cat, what would they be thinking? would it all make sense and they would just provide some canine/feline opinion? or would they lash out on us people folk for carrying on the way we do .. we cater to the animals .. they pal around, sleep, shit, eat, lop and bop about as we take them here and there like an eternal infant that isn't ever going to grow up .. from the time the domesticated pet comes into the clutches of an owner until their show is done, we cater to them .. they are either eternally grateful or think we have to be the stupidest subservient fucking form of flesh around .. and how about those 7 years in 1 year ration for the domesticated animal world .. is their life that rough that they can age faster than any President during a 4-year run? listen, if they can transcribe the thoughts of an animal onto paper I think they would say that human involvement in their life is the reason why they age so quickly .. or would they have a competing theory of the inverse proportion .. maybe we age 7 years per one year and that's the reason why we start decomposing so early .. listen, I was at a Spaghetti luncheon across the river in Kansas City, Kansas with my boss and some girls from the youth center we run .. while I was looking around, there were plenty of older folk in the place .. I asked how the fuck we as humans age as quickly as we do .. how does our flesh and body just start collapsing into itself? we become these shrunken beings that degenerate with bowls, teeth and all into children .. doesn't 60 years seem to soon to flake into that position .. you know, the kids in the old biblical stories were supposedly around for several hundred years? how? with all the technology and such that is around

these days, how is it that we can't last longer .. is it because we don't want to or scientists don't want to work on that potion because technology is the direct result of a more fast paced life that only requires 70-90 good years on the planet .. so, I ask my boss how we decompose as humans so quickly .. he was just shaking his head .. man, he said, I don't want to live that long .. not at all, he continued .. I agreed .. he said he had a great, great, great grandmother that lived till she was about 100 years old .. she was skinnier than a bone .. her flesh was like rubber and she still woke up every Sunday and made it to church .. though, he said that we are the kind that will probably make it near that age .. I disagree for me with the way I have a tendency of treating my body .. though, it's much more believable for him .. he comes from a solid gene pool, works out on a regular basis, drinks plenty of fluids, doesn't smoke, doesn't drink liquor or use drugs .. for me .. I do just about everything opposite of him .. though, his rationale was that we work to help and sustain other people in lieu of making a lot of money .. he said that to compensate for a life of meager living wages we will likely live a long, long life .. shit, I'm not opposed to it .. just seems like a rough lot to degenerate as much as folk do once they hit that final age stretch to the finish line .. day by day baby .. day by day in a dangerous land of quality sunsets and good food if you know the right people and quality entertainment if you know where to look for it .. that's enough for this kid now ..

don't lift your fingers off the key, the aging writer told me .. fuck doing an outline or trying to sit around over a cup of coffee or whatever other liquid libation to come up with the next big novel that's going to smack the New York Times in the chops and make it to the Hollywood editing floor .. just write .. that's the way it works .. do it until the pain in your fingers starts to make no sense and you begin jotting things that you never believed you were capable of the next morning when you read over the proof .. fuck it, don't even sleep .. type straight through the night and however many days until delirium grabs a hold of you and you never want to read another word you write .. yet, you will continue to write .. just hit print and give it to someone else to read for you and either edit or give you a good solid response to what was written .. sure, even if you forget how to write, the old man said, keep on smacking down on those keys as though they are bad mouthing your mom, family, lost cousin or spouse .. just fucking get it all out .. talk about the man crossing Minnesota Avenue with a grocery cart full with cases of pop .. describe how you watched him at a rather long light cross west to east, then north to south .. describe the look on his face .. the countenance of an old war hero converted into a society survivor looking around in sheer confidence, but scared shitless of a simple computer sitting on the brim rim of a white table top .. sure, go from this bloke to the guy at the bus stand arguing with his imaginary friend or the couple of Mexican kid's way up the roadway running as fast as they can from one side to the other .. sure, and writing errors, come right along with the territory .. in fact, the old man always told me that only way to refine the writing process or to learn anything about getting the language down on a slip or scroll of paper is to make mistakes .. as that point you remember the spelling, think about conjugation and question the use of grammar that was forged into that long string of words you didn't stop writing until you went either insane or you fell over from exhaustion .. fuck the phone .. fuck the girlfriend .. fuck the family and friends .. fuck eating .. piss in bucket beneath the desk .. shit your pants .. burn your fingertips .. and one of the most important survival tactics was to have plenty of cigarettes and fire around you .. fire for the tobacco and candles .. cigarettes for when the pain and blindness seemed way too fucking much to take .. shit, go back to the classroom and talk about that professor that believed you wouldn't make it in shit .. I had a professor in college that taught journalism .. he was a boorish old salty sort that would read his old newspaper stories and everyone else in the class .. a slow, monotone voice that could put you away quicker than an automatic rifle .. he would read and read .. I was in his class and wrote for the local college weekly .. the charm with this man is that he had no visible favorites save for a few and was brutal as fuck when he reviewed writing .. he tore me open more times than I can count .. informed me several times that I had a slim hope in journalism .. shit, I only wrote for a newspaper and took his class to hedge my way into the industry .. I wanted the lights and make-up of television .. he didn't give a fuck about that .. he felt that if you entered

the arena of journalism's written word you had better take it fucking seriously .. and he did in a slight tongue and cheek manner .. so his name was C. Hammer .. a peach of a man, now looking back .. so, as time went along .. I stuck in with this whole journalism bend .. I fought, got tore up and wrote all the time for this newspaper .. well, 4 years later .. I had written for 3 and a half of those years winning a handful of awards from the college association of newspaper writers .. the only judging panel in the entire state .. well, I dropped the 'y' in Joey and became Joe .. he flicked me a load of shit in his weekly review after I pulled that dandy out of my pocket .. he also finally came around to admitting that I could write .. he even threw me on that fabled favorites list and may still mention my name in class .. C. Hammer .. still writing a ripping people open .. it warms my heart every time .. every damn time ..

**

Another album,
paint a book,
rip the filter off,
take your 3rd chin on a walk,
listen to the rain as though it's a new blender,
send off the satellites,
meet the folk,
get the offer,
take the buying for a gift ..

**

a boss running from the bullet as the smoking gun goes simmering from her front pocket ..

**

used pull tabs, the lost lotteries, the neighbor girl plucking her vagina hair, bad hair from terrible guests on talk shows and the new breeze that brought the candle back to life ..

**

the battle for power when all she wants is more selfish pride ..

**

morning bulldozers and the birds that just sit around and watch ..

**

Hallelujah as the mocking bird wails loud and clean ..

**

Another album,
paint a book,
rip the filter off,
take your 3rd chin on a walk,
listen to the rain as though it's a new blender,

send off the satellites,
meet the folk,
get the offer,
take the buying for a gift ..

**

I was walking near the mall in DC .. somewhere around the Department of Commerce when a maroon helicopter comes careening down into the center of the road .. I duck with my back up onto a retaining wall looking and wondering what the fuck is going down .. is this the invasion or some big mistake .. I look to my right and see a red car with lights in the dash smooth up about 10 feet from the helicopter .. both of these maroon vehicles have the Washington DC Fire Department acronym and logos blaring out at me .. then, a regular black limo pulls up in front of me and a voice begins to boom somewhere in the sky behind me .. **‘PLEASE FOLKS, PUT IT TOGETHER FOR THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, JIMMY CARTER ..** “ Carter comes strolling out with a good entourage of secret service boys .. I come to my feet and watch the Jimmy Carter dream unfold .. shit, I’m thinking, my dad would dig this shit .. Carter loads his peanut body into the limo and quickly races down the street .. I look around and wonder what the fuck happened as the dream ends and Jimmy goes off into the next persons dream for whatever reason ..

**

Another dream .. I had this morning image of a low cub bard completely kicked in .. then, there is broken glass and other items that look out of place .. I look around and figure there was a break in on the apartment .. I veer around to see what else was taken .. only the tuner on my stereo stack .. they must have kicked in the cub bard after they found out that there wasn’t anything more to take or anything of any value .. just paper, magazines, bottles, glasses, paintings, CD’s, pens, pencils and such .. just a mad intruder and they took off with Falkner’s ‘Bedtime with the Beatles’ .. horrible fucker .. so, I look out across the way towards the black woman’s apartment that is usually draped with closed blinds and notice that her place was turned the fuck over .. these guys were mad .. her couch was out on the sidewalk ripped to shit and half burned up .. her window screens were ripped open and she was in shock going through her shit through open windows that were against her will to be open in the first place .. the entire block looked like they got robbed .. must have been the metaphor that the whole block that had dreams that didn’t live up to their expectations .. people were getting the raw end of the deal in a plate of dreams that just didn’t live up to snuff .. yet, I still had little for the dream intruder to take .. guess it’s not who dies with the most toys wins, after all ..

**

I waited around a little while in the center while my colleague was giving the young lifeguard some lip service .. this man has laid more women at one job that I probably have in my entire life .. he’s a fucking maverick .. the kind of guy that doesn’t drink, smoke or do anything that damages his body .. jam up attitude and the women are his drug .. so, waiting for him to come out so we can catch some ceremony at the local high school up the street .. we’re running a little late and a kid in the program, Toby, is walking with us .. he was waiting for my co-worker to give him a ride to the shelter him, his mom and brothers are staying at downtown .. so, knowing we’re late for this school function, we decide to fly on home and it’s closer to me to take Toby back to the shelter he’s living in temporarily now .. this kid is one of the best one’s we have .. one of the few white kids in an inner-city program that’s primarily black .. Toby stays out of trouble and is cool to all that have come into contact with him .. clearly a product of having to grow up a fuck lot over time .. much

more than most 15-year-olds his age .. he's thinking about getting a job to help out his mom who had her 4th kid about six months ago and is now working full-time at the Gas Station downtown .. so, we do some talking on the way to the shelter and he's unfamiliar with downtown but sure about what he has to do in this world .. we whip around on eighth and hear an old timer yell in the over the setting sun into car, "Hey" .. I say 'hey' back and he asks, "Lookin'?" .. I don't have time to respond and ask Toby if he did as if we we're lookin' .. he nodded 'yes' .. shit, how many times does he have to go through those looking for hand-outs and drug deals around this shelter .. so, we pull in up front and he tells me his mom isn't around as he crooks his neck around to the park across the street to see if there is anyone to hang out with until his mother gets home .. there is .. I make sure as he tells me it's cool .. he gets out and tells me he may see me at the center tomorrow as I think about this tough inner youth fighting a fight that was outside of his control .. sometimes it's hard for me to get choked over situations .. though, Toby is a fucking good kid that presumably deserves more, yet he's getting it for his reason and reasons floating around the mystery of our existence .. he'll be fine taking the city bus to the premiere school across the river, denying drug dealers in their selling of dope, the peddlers, whores, unwanted children, church handouts, donated clothing, wondering about the next meal, watching the waterfall collecting dust and all the rest .. keep fucking battling, youth archer, your arrow is sinking into this world well ..

**

the rock band came down to their last note .. and it was from one of the groupies .. she's pregnant and owns a lot of fuckin' guns ..

**

couldn't remember any dreaming last night .. in fact, I remember only Cliff, the guy going for the Ph.D. and the physician at the free health clinic .. when I woke, I forgot where I was at .. no idea if it was my room until I smelled the oil paints and remembered what she said to me some days ago ..

**

going down two
spaces
as
the
fucker in the Isuzu Trooper parked so close to my
car
that
I almost took out a tail light and form tackled his fucking wheels (those that remain) ..

**

I look at
an old postcard mailed from
my
lover friend in London on Sept. 17, 2001
the day
we were to get on back to Amerika ..

she
and I

wrote each other a post card
about the experience ..

I received hers and she never
received mine ..

A message perhaps ..

**

what happened to originality
or
is
it just duplicity these days ..

**

I'm on some college campus in the Midwest when I run into a girl from Chicago .. I remember her face, but have a hard time with her name .. she's giving me the eye and approaches me .. this is after some time of playful looks and curiosity on both our parts .. so, when we run into each other she winks at me, grabs my hand and asks if I remember her .. I pull close and tell her 'yes', which is obviously bullshit .. can't remember the name and usually that's enough to piss off most .. so, as I'm thinking over her name .. I notice a calendar in her hand .. the name is coming closer .. then, for the day in question, May 30, is glaringly clear on her calendar with my name scratched in there with a heart around it .. she has the crush and I slough off her name and start talking about when we met .. it was at some gathering for work or such and we then begin shooting the bullshit as though her name doesn't mean much and I'll find it out later .. if later was to come in this dream .. so, we get separated and I go off to the bathroom .. on the way back out of the bathroom some girl comes flying towards me in a fury and starts giving me shit about what happened to her good friend Emily after we stopped dating .. in fact, we just didn't talk to each other anymore .. the girl was cute, but a pure ding-a-ling .. something was in there, but it took a better locksmith than me with the right blood type to crack the safe's code .. so, this girl is giving me the verbal goods and as she moves to the side slightly, I notice Emily giving me a sheepish look .. all the while, I tone out the ass chewin' until she asks me to go over to Emily and explain why I wouldn't see her anymore and try to squelch her breaking heart .. shit, we haven't seen each other for over a year-and-a-half save for a spotting in a video store about 7 months ago .. so, I agree and begin approaching her .. she's upset, wrapped in an afghan blanket on such a warm day and I notice that she is missing the top of several fingers .. shit, what happened, I try to remember if she had all her fingers the last time we saw each other .. the last time was in the parking lot after a rock show at a local club .. I gave her a hug and knew she was the farther from my sensual center as it gets .. so, I approach her and tell her the reasons why we didn't make it past the flight of Mars and how shit was going to continue going down here on Earth .. this didn't go over well with her .. my explanation .. **'LOOK, YOU'RE A NICE GIRL, BUT YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY NOT MY TYPE .. SURE, YOU'RE CUTE, BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH YOU'RE OFFERING .. YOU LACK GENERAL CONVERSATION SKILLS AND THE WORD EXPERIENCE HASN'T SEEMED TO COME INTO YOUR LIFE, UNLESS YOU SHOVELED ME ANOTHER BULLSHIT SIDE OF YOUR PERSONALITY THAT WAS MISTAKEN .. BUT WHAT HAPPENED THEN AND WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS .. I'M HAPPILY INVOLVED WITH AN AMAZING WOMAN AND YOU WERE JUST A 'DATE GIRL' THAT WENT NO WHERE .. I CAN'T SAY I'M SORRY BECAUSE I GAVE IT A SHOT .. SO, I'LL SAY GOOD LUCK AND CIAO .. PLEASE DON'T FRET OVER THIS, YOU**

DON'T KNOW ME WELL ENOUGH AND I DON'T HAVE A DESIRE TO KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH ..GOOD BYE' .. as I walk off, her trumpet mouth friend starts giving me another ass chewin' as I wave her off .. walking on, she tells me that Emily has a real bad problem with her grief, anguish and the aftermath .. it involves scissors and her fingers .. she has picked up a new demented habit of cutting the top portion of her fingers clean from her body during periods of anguish .. this makes me stop .. I look at the friend and ask where Emily went off to .. she glares at me and asks exactly what I said to her .. shit, I began, it's none of your fucking business .. let's just find her .. so, we split up and start looking for her .. as we're looking, I notice the girl from Chicago is leaving this social function on the college campus with no name .. she's walking about 20 feet away and behind a set of columns that obstruct my view .. as I go quickly over to say good-bye and resume my search for Emily .. I hear a moaning in some grass off to my right and I look over recognizing the voice .. it's Emily and she's laying down in the grass with blood on her face, discarded scissors, discarded fingers and blood oozing on the lawn .. I get to her .. comfort her and yell for her friends to come over .. they arrive and start talking soft to her for comfort while giving me the evil pairs of eyes as though I was the sole reason why she was writhing in blood .. I tell them I will call "911" .. I go to a pay phone and do just that .. calling the paramedics to the mystery location I know the address for and scave the landscape to see if the Chicago girl is still around .. she's gone .. and the old date girl has lost a couple of fingers .. so, I finish the call, lay the phone on the metal grabber and start walking off .. Emily will be in good hands with the friends and paramedics .. I need to get on to the next dream and out of the design someone wanted me to create with closed eyes, active subconscious and a rap sheet of questions that have been answered months ago .. I'm just wanting the new sheet of answers this dream hid from me .. I'll have to try again on another night, girly ..

* *

the price of vanity
is the test
of your convictions ..

* *

the new aches
as
body approaches another decade ..

* *

the afterglow of
something not close to losing its glow yet ..

* *

those that ask questions
answer the questions
that those around didn't have
the
balls
to
ask in
the

first place ..

**

a digital memoir
for the analog age ..

POWER THE FUCK DOWN ..

**

the last thing
we need is
another poet
&
the only thing we really need
is a fucking
good
poet ..

**

look at them like
you
know 'em ..

**

one
more cheer for the silent ones
brooding over
their drink
and
making up their
own characters
for
later use ..

**

the kid's burning ass
and
the blue screen
against the KC Twin Towers ..

**

Had pizza with
strangers I will never see again ..

stray dogs chasing familiar cats

and
the once lively ball just sitting
as though tomorrow
wasn't true,
too good to be so ..

**

people love the messy,
fucked,
trite
episodes
while striving for
pure
unadulterated divinity ..

yea .. yea ..

**

I'm the 5th man in the band
and
I can hardly
hold

a
note ..

**

hot air balloons with advertisements,
then
along came you ..

**

several billboard ideas ..

one is something written backwards ..

'TSEB EHT' along with some logo for a company ..

you can only see it while looking in your rear view mirror
and
another message is spelled backwards ..

'KCAB KOOL REVEN' ..

or
this one ..

in large black letters the words,
'MARRY ME'

appear with a small logo for Trojan condoms
or
a
florist's logo ..

people would fucking look at
these billboards ..

have you .. ?

* *

months and months (May)
after the terrorist attacks,
we are getting the bitter call of lost
freedoms and something sacrificed for a prize
is sure they want
in the
states now ..

* *

Jefferson had all the good quotes,
then he
passed the on to Churchill ..

* *

stranded barks
and the
smells that never go away ..

* *

bubbles gurglin' from
the
middle

of you ..

* *

the Grateful Dead hour
on the radio as the boy bands
buy a box of condoms in disguise ..

* *

computers tend to be a waste
of
time

when you really have
to
wonder what you will do without one ..

**

go ahead
and flip in over
red jacket,

give
them

a
reason to ransom
a
chase after you ..

**

honesty is
the only
of the only redeeming gifts of a human being ..

**

the spoof
of the day ..

a notch in the oxygen line
while respect
took greed out for a drink
as
the executive
horse fucked pride
and
made it
seem so
natural,
normal ..

**

the four-headed
serpent stole your
old
meatloaf ..

**

It is only the
unicorn
that has
a
sure,
solid pint
in
the
fantasy world ..

**

the sidesplitting humor
tearing the tumor
to
a
quaint laugh ..

**

rotate your
fan
or
we'll turn on you ..

**

a house of guests,
while
the
visitor robs
the
china shelf ..

**

sliver of moon
is
a
slice of nectarine ..

**

we're again waiting on a friend
as
the
questions arise
&

the corn is indeed worth a pickin' ..

* *

ride,
ride,
roll on
there on your
bones of
plutonium ..

* *

the tiger pelt
took out the bacon
as
the
recess took the kids home
and
the recording CD went
all but blank ..

* *

her tits
were replaced
with eyes as nipples ..

she can
indeed see every move
you

make ..

* *

not enough time with the words
at
night is more
than plenty during the day
to

compensate ..

* *

someone is out there
looking
for
a
medium to save 'em ..

**

record my heart
on your plate,
shapes in the microwave,
eat with some conviction
&
call me back when it won't grow
within
you ..

**

run me through the mill,
call the factory
and
let's call it all even for the sake
of
the
raising odds ..

**

that space
is reserved
for
the
reverend's dentures ..

**

I have a copy of *Gone with the Wind*
on the shitter
to
keep me occupied ..

my most appropriate bathroom
reader

yet ..

**

I sometimes wonder
if *Woody Allen* and *Liberace* every
sat

around and really shot the shit
good and hard ..