

# **POEMS FROM PRAGUE**

**A collection of poems from the Beef Stew Poetry Readings  
in Prague from November 1999 to April 2001**

**Prague 2001**

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# Introduction

When I came back to Prague in the autumn of '99 my friend Becky from Oklahoma set me up with a place to stay and a job teaching English at the school where she worked. It was a hell of a welcome home, especially as the last leg of my Asian trip was a stint in a Malaysian prison, but that's another story.

Prague really does feel like home to me, even though I'm not from here, have no particular ethnic connection that I know of, barely speak the language and spend 90% of the time when I'm not teaching hanging out with other foreigners. If home is where the heart is, here I am.

Becky took me along one Sunday night, after I'd been back just a few days, to a pair of poetry readings. The first was in a jazz club near Old Town Square in a brick basement with an arched ceiling, like so many basements in Prague. There was a pianist on stage accompanying the readers. It was dark, it was smoky, it was a parody of Greenwich Village in the Beat Generation.

Some of the readers were rather interesting, a few of them sucked pretty bad.

The second one was about a half an hour walk away, at a cafe called Radost FX. When you were with Becky, you walked everywhere. She would let a perfectly good tram rumble by just for the pleasure of walking through Prague streets at night.

There was no Piano at Radost nor, for that matter, a stage. It was in a basement, of course (so much of Prague's night life happens in basements) but it wasn't the classic brick Cask of Amontillado basement. It was the bar of a discotheque and it was a utilitarian design with bad 60s decor. There were leopard skin couches, low metal kidney shaped tables and a wall of broken bottles behind glass, with a pale orange light shining through them. It was dark, it was smoky, it was a parody of Greenwich Village in the Beat Generation.

Some of the readers were rather interesting, a few of them sucked pretty bad.

After a couple of weeks, I summoned up the courage to read one of my poems at Radost. Pretty soon, I ran out of poems and had to start writing new stuff, if I wanted to read every week. So, for the last year and a half almost, I have been writing at least one poem a week and often more. Some of them have been fairly interesting and some of them have sucked pretty bad.

Just having the venue to read has created an incentive to write, and the need to write something new every week has meant that I have written more than ever before in my life, and I now have enough poems to put together into a book.

So, I'd like to thank all of the people who have listened to me on all of those Sunday nights, some of which were pretty horrible. I would also like to thank Helena, who helped me put it all together and was the inspiration for more than a couple of the poems, besides. And, of course, Becky.

## **The Beef Stew Poem**

On a street in Vinohrady  
on a street called Belehradská  
on the red, I.P. Pavlova  
on the green, Namesti Miru

Stands a café known as Radost  
trendy, artsy-fartsy Radost  
very popular with expats  
and the self-appointed in-crowd

There they serve the fruity waffles  
with whipped cream and maple syrup  
there they serve the “Big-brain scramble”  
stupid name, but very filling

Seated low, on comfy couches  
decadent as ancient Romans  
and the waitresses are gorgeous  
but that’s normal, in this country

There’s a room, off to the side, where  
hopeful artists hang their paintings  
or their photos, mostly photos  
and their friends all come to see them

Sometimes we sit there for coffee  
when there are no empty tables  
there the waitress seldom ventures  
it could be another planet

Down the stairs, beyond the bathrooms  
which are often locked or broken  
in the basement, there's a disco  
and the dance floor's small and crowded

Hot young girls with bodies bursting  
with the power of their gender  
moving like a swaying ocean  
feel the power of their motion

But the bar is cool and spacious  
with a wall of broken bottles  
brown and ugly, eerie lighting  
someone must have thought it trendy

But it's cool and you can talk there  
on the leopard spotted couches  
that have felt a thousand assholes  
on a thousand drunken evenings

It is quiet in the daytime  
in the haunted disco dungeon  
Monday nights, they schedule movies  
which are almost always canceled

So, there's mostly eerie silence  
that the ghost of disco leaves there  
leaves a void that must be filled there  
filled with words as yet unspoken

So we gather, Sunday evenings  
those of us who would be poets  
those of us with massive egos  
gather to dispel the silence

Like the tree that falls unwitnessed  
in the forest of the proverbs  
are the words of nameless poets  
who are neither Blake nor Shelley

Here, our words can fill the silence  
here, our words may have a meaning  
in the basement of a café  
on a street in Vinohrady

## Random Thoughts

If you drop an egg, it doesn't bounce  
30 grams is the same as an ounce  
and I live on a street that I can't pronounce  
at the top of a flight of stairs

It takes 24 hours for one full spin  
you have to go out if you want to come in  
and I didn't ask him to die for my sins  
I wasn't even there

The world is a stage, the world is a screen  
there's always something we haven't seen  
and how can we know what anything means?  
or what is right and wrong?

The Taoists, the Buddhists, the Christians, the Jews  
are arguing over yesterday's news  
every point has a different view  
can't we all just get along?

Hate contracts and love expands  
each reward has its own demands  
it's only a little bit of sand  
in the oyster that makes the pearl

Sometimes I'm out walking and I don't know why  
to circle a square is as easy as pi  
from wherever you are, if you look at the sky  
you're standing on top of the world

What is the link between beauty and art?  
Does it come from the head, does it come from the heart?  
I don't know the ending before I start  
but the setting is so sublime

I'm for open markets and global trade  
and I love the way these old buildings are made  
but, let's face it, I'm here 'cause I want to get laid  
the rest is just passing the time

The sweet golden nectar that deadens the brain  
fairy tale castles and cobblestone lanes  
and the girls are so pretty it drives you insane  
how long can this fantasy last?

We toke on our reefer, we guzzle our beer  
but where will we be this time next year?  
Why should the future be any more clear  
than the present was in the past?

If you wrestle a pig, you're gonna get muddy  
a joint or two never hurt nobody  
sometimes we learn without having to study  
we all get more than we earn

Life is easy if you don't try  
to understand the reason why  
you live, you laugh and then you die  
and it's somebody else's turn

Though Vincent may have lost his mind  
the pictures that he left behind  
are like a map to help us find  
the vision that made him insane

You may be wrong, you may be right  
but once it's down in black and white  
it becomes a bit, or perhaps a byte  
in the universal brain

Eight times eight is sixty four  
there's a value to every square on the board  
and everyone seems to be keeping score  
but what is the point of the game?

A pair doesn't have to be two of a kind  
there's nothing finer than unrefined  
and life before death is a word undefined  
there's a hell of a lot in a name

But the object is not the same as the word  
lines on a map seem so absurd  
there are no borders if you are a bird  
adrift on the afternoon breeze

The world is a place where we all live together  
in all kinds of places, in all kinds of weather  
the swamps and the prairies, the forests, the heather  
the deserts, the mountains, the seas

Whatever will be, will be unplanned  
but you have to be flying before you can land  
Reincarnation is out of our hands  
a pig is reborn as a ham

Space is as black as the time before birth  
and as full of potential and infinite worth  
the meek may well inherit the earth  
but by then it won't be worth a damn

I think about food until I've been fed  
a rose is both beautiful and red  
a step to the side will get you ahead  
and tomorrow's a beautiful day

Sometimes I drink coffee  
sometimes I drink tea  
admission into the future is free  
and wherever you're going, that's where you'll be  
I'm glad to be on my way.

## People in a Can

I watch the trams as they rattle by  
and try to catch somebody's eye but,  
oblivious to all outside  
They ride, they ride, they ride, they ride

Sitting, standing, they fill the spaces  
with blank and non-committal faces  
What morbid genius hatched this plan  
for moving people in a can?

Those who are here are going there  
(we won't concern ourselves with where)and they have to  
leave, to leave space clear  
for everyone who's coming here

moving containers back and forth  
west to east and south to north  
shuttling from here to there  
in a constant game of musical chairs

if we want so badly to be somewhere  
why is it we aren't already there?

## **Walking Through Nusle at Night**

It's two a.m., I need to get some sleep  
but the night bus is a half an hour away  
I'd rather walk than stand around and wait  
and so, at night, I walk the city streets

When all the trade and traffic of the day  
has disappeared and all the streets are clear  
the static's gone away and we can hear  
the click of shoes a block or two away

I feel compelled to silence and to stealth  
the night is black in mourning for the day  
and all that's bright has faded into gray  
the city is a statue of itself

each building is a piece of that design  
and here and there a screen is glowing white  
but the action's mostly hidden from our sight  
the human drama plays for private eyes

it's only in the darkness of the night  
we see the true significance of light

## September

We were rowing on the Vltava  
about a week ago  
straight across from Letna Park  
moving kind of slow

I could see right through the trees  
the people walking there  
that formerly solid wall of green  
was thinner than my hair!

The summer went by in a flash this summer  
this summer went by too fast  
and all those bright tomorrow's  
have become the timeless past

Springtime's hopeful projects  
that we never did begin  
join the leaves along the sidewalk  
as they fly before the wind

I'm sorry we never got together  
I'm sorry I never called  
Now that summer's almost over  
and we're headed for the fall

Last May seems just like yesterday  
when the sun shone on and on  
but now the day is almost over  
and the sun is almost gone

It was a summer of being together  
a summer of being apart  
a summer the sun lit up the walls  
of the cave within my heart

It was a summer of love and joy  
it was a summer of death  
and now it fades into a puff  
of Autumn's frosty breath

Some things will last forever  
some things won't even last  
the summer went by too fast this summer  
this summer went by too fast

## **Left Bank, Vltava**

I've heard it said, again and again  
that Prague is now what Paris was then  
where artists and writers congregate  
like birds of a feather, like fish to bait  
If that is true, as has been stated  
and the zeitgeist has been reincarnated  
I'll just sit in a Prague cafe  
until I start writing like Hemingway

## **Riegrovy Sady**

Each one's a little different  
Each one's a little the same  
I love this park  
but I don't know its name

## **RIP**

Under this street, there lies a hill  
sloping gently to the top  
and every year, there'd be a crop  
of grass and leaves and tangled brush  
and fox and squirrel and lark and thrush  
a pretty hillside in the wood  
and people saw that it was good  
and built their homes there, one or two  
just so they could admire the view  
and two or three soon grew, you see  
for everyone so loved the trees  
that thousands soon were living there  
in the wood so green and fair  
built their schools and stores and churches  
amid the oaks and elms and birches  
and so they wouldn't strain their feet  
they went ahead and built the street  
and writ on the stones, so quiet and still  
is: Under this street, there lies a hill

## **The Legend of Libuse**

Between two sloping banks the river flowed  
about a river deep and river wide  
an ancient forest covered either side  
one fall, a couple thousand years ago

One day, a princess walking through the wood  
ate some mushrooms growing from the ground  
(the kind that make your head spin round and round)  
sat down on the bank and it was good

The evening sun so red it looked like fire  
belied the coolness of the evening breeze  
and in the light it cast upon the trees  
she saw a city of a thousand spires

Whose beauty reached up to the very sky  
there by the river, with its steady flow  
she sat and watched the golden city grow  
and her vision was completed, by and by

How could Libuše so exactly see  
the way things really did turn out to be?

## **A Czech Christmas Carol**

The tree is up in Old Town Square  
the lights are nice and bright  
there's boiled wine to warm the blood  
through chilly winter nights

Rosy cheeks are glowing  
with the season's effervescence  
as young and old both contemplate  
the coming of the presents

Joyous music fills the air  
with lovely Christmas song  
and the checkout line at Tesco  
is a half an hour long

Yes, Christmas time is coming  
everybody's baking sweets  
but there's still something missing  
It isn't quite complete

Soon the basins will appear  
on every city street  
with frigid, running water  
that turns to ice beneath your feet

and fat men wearing waders  
will fulfill your Christmas wish  
and slam a mallet on the head  
of an unsuspecting fish

Oh, the blood is running through the streets  
their knives are long and sharp  
it is the time for peace on Earth  
and the killing of the carp

You can keep your ham and turkey  
your Santa and his sleigh  
because, for me, it isn't Christmas  
without carp on Christmas day

## Prague Spring

It's Spring! It's Prague! I feel alive!  
there's magic in the air  
I'm walking down the street  
without a worry or a care

The wicked wind of winter  
has lost its frigid bite  
if it weren't raining like a bastard  
it'd probably be bright

Chains of wet, green buds adorn  
each brown and barren branch  
as full of hope and promise  
as a budding new romance

Pink and yellow jackets  
are replacing coats of black  
yesterday I smiled  
and somebody smiled back!

Prague is really pretty  
under a blanket of fresh white snow  
but in the sunshine of the springtime  
certain things begin to show

The sights that greet this poor boy's eyes  
are so beautiful it hurts  
as I ride the escalators  
and I look up women's skirts

So, if you were to ask me  
why I keep coming back  
I'd say "It isn't the hash at the Chapeau Rouge,  
the ecstasy or the crack.

It isn't the beautiful buildings  
the operas or the plays  
it isn't the salaries, or the galleries  
restaurants and cafes

It isn't the view from Charles Bridge  
it isn't the Old Town Square  
it isn't the parek v rohliku  
that you can buy anywhere

It isn't the flowers in the park  
it's not the birds who sing  
but the flower of Czech womanhood  
that blossoms every spring

## **The Yellow Line**

The yellow line is as low as you can go  
if you're riding the red, there is still another level below  
in the event of a nuclear war  
I know exactly where I'm heading for  
the yellow line is as low as you can go

When it's time to go home  
we head down into a hole  
just like the rats and the snakes  
the weasels, rabbits and moles  
It'll get you anywhere in town  
it isn't alternative, it's just underground  
the yellow line is as low as you can go

The escalators going down so slow  
with all the blank faced zombies  
standing all in a row  
It's like you're falling down into a well  
and if you keep on going, you'll wind up in hell  
The yellow line is as low as you can go

## Logos and Theos

In the woods, a tree falls to the ground  
but no one's there, so does it make a sound?  
If sounds defined as something that we hear  
the answer must be negative, it's clear

If God created man, and not instead  
the other way around, as some have said  
it may have been because he had no choice  
Does he exist if no one hears his voice?

From the seed, the reaching, looping vines  
never, ever grow along straight lines  
Yet plants whose leaves are twisted, random, tangled  
are seen as fields with even lines and angles

From the mountains towering above  
the pattern's only clear when you're clear of it  
the credit for the universal plan  
in fairness, must be shared by God and man

The Logos is connected to the Theos  
What else but order could come out of chaos?

## **Walking Home in the Evening**

Walking home in the evening, a pain in my feet  
I see street after street after street after street  
of buildings in concrete, so gray and so tall  
wall after wall after wall after wall

It seems so frustrating, each life in a box  
block after block after block after block  
then one by one, but all the same  
in frame after frame after frame after frame

The lights come on, dispelling the gloom  
in room after room after room after room  
off and then on, in a binary code  
in node after node after node after node

And so it has been from the time of creation  
in generation upon generation  
from the first spark of life, which grew so well  
in cell after cell after cell after cell

It grew and it changed through trouble and strife  
in life after life after life after life  
created the grasses, the massive yield  
in field after field after field after field

Created the trees, so solid and good  
in wood after wood after wood after wood  
the birds and the fish, from cradle to grave  
in wave after wave after wave after wave

created a creature who stood upright  
in fight after flight after flight after flight  
a lifetime to live and a lifetime to learn  
as turn after turn after turn after turn

They plowed their fields and they built their homes  
in Cairo and Carthage and Athens and Rome  
Each struggling peasant fell into his niche  
in ditch after ditch after ditch after ditch

And from father to daughter, from mother to son  
one after one after one after one  
bear the code of the species, the mark of the race  
upon face after face after face after face

Without any planning, without our design  
and yet line upon line upon line upon line  
of the human parade is passing the stand  
in band after band after band after band

If you look too close, you see nothing at all  
but wall after wall after wall after wall  
yet, as I stare out at the infinite light  
and see light after light after light after light

I long for the day we will make it that far  
to star after star after star after star

## Patterns

The polished wood reveals the grain  
an open book that could explain  
the heart of a tree, the soul of the wood  
unfelt, and so misunderstood  
or the visible flow of a running stream  
with Flo's and Eddie's to me it seems  
a visible sign put there to show  
the way it goes, the way it goes  
or the lines and the waves of the drifting sand  
which may be random and unplanned  
but yet, look closely and they could  
be said to resemble the grain of wood  
the reason isn't clear to me  
it doesn't seem like it should be

## Words

There are words like “please” and “thank you”  
that we use to be polite  
Or “Dear Sir” and “Quite Sincerely”  
which are useful when we write

There’s “good morning” and “how are you?”  
to help start out the day  
and words like “left” and “right” and “straight”  
to help us on our way

There are verbs to say what’s happening  
and nouns to say what’s what  
and the short ones called conjunctions  
such as “if” and “and” and “but”

Sometimes you change an accent  
and a verb becomes a noun  
They will record our record  
sounds like they like our sound

There are gestures which have meaning  
just as much as any word  
like the upraised middle finger  
known as “giving one the bird”

or the arching of an eyebrow  
or the cocking of an ear  
that says you’re saying something  
that I really want to hear

The way you walk into a room  
can show the way you feel  
hesitation in a handshake  
can ruin a major deal

So much of what we mean to say  
depends upon our style  
The most important word in any language  
is a smile

## **Carrot and Stick**

The carrot and stick, it's easy to choose  
it seems like an offer you can't refuse

We seek the pleasure, avoid the pain  
Follow the sun, stay out of the rain

Pavlovian parrots who've learned what's good  
and do the things we know we should

The mule gets a carrot, the dog gets a bone  
Everybody gets a cellular phone

I'd like to find an alternative pick  
but I still don't want to get whacked with the stick

## **Alienation**

I was in a crowd of people  
but I felt so all alone  
Everyone around me  
was talking on the phone

## **Time Lapse Photography**

Time lapse photography  
catches the clouds as they  
move on the wind like the  
waves of the ocean  
Koyanishqatsi, the  
streets of the city, where  
people are moving like cells in the bloodstream, we

Still

Hear

The roar of the ocean  
recorded in cells that have  
covered the Earth in un-  
checked procreation  
fight or flight chemicals  
leaping the synapses  
writing the software  
of civilization

Or

Are

We like bodies of coral  
that grow into atolls  
and just, through attrition  
have gained our self-consciousness  
right answers saved and the  
wrong ones deleted  
per the original  
binary postulate

It's  
Clear  
That nothing is random here  
everything's meaningful  
choreographed in a cosmic ballet that goes  
Koyanisqatsi, the  
flowers that close at night  
open each morning to  
greet the new day, and

What  
Do  
We see when we look through the  
lens of a microscope  
everything's moving and  
interconnected but  
all of the data which  
we have received shows us  
there is a pattern to  
what we perceive  
and that's

Good  
But  
Does it have a purpose, I  
don't know the answer, I  
don't know the answer and  
you don't know either, I'm  
sure that that's true, Buddhist  
or Hindu or Christian  
or Jew, I have no reason to think  
that you do

So

If

The world is a circle and  
life is a spiral that  
always goes forward when  
moving through time, and we  
all the while, in fear and  
denial, live out our lives  
though we know we will die  
and nobody, nobody understands why

How

Did

We conjure the creed that we've  
labeled our consciousness  
demons, damnation and  
negative attitudes  
where did we locate  
the Gods that we follow  
filling a space that we  
cannot leave hollow

With

All

Our totems and talismans  
channeling energy  
out of the synergy  
nature, reality  
these are the reasons  
the cycles, the seasons  
our thinking has followed  
the path it was put on

The  
Heart  
Beat of all our mythology  
lies in biology  
Oedipus Rex was the King Motherfucker and  
that's what is stored at the  
root of our consciousness  
that's what is stored in our  
Jungian memory

Deep  
Down  
There, Morrison knew it, he  
told me one evening  
when I was on acid  
and he was on video  
better in context than  
taken alone, from the  
"Doors of Perception" to  
Oliver Stone upon stone

We  
Build  
Each generation u-  
surping the last one in-  
herits the world as a  
matter of course  
We are the Lizard Kings  
We are the core of a  
growing anthropo-  
centrifugal force

But  
We're  
Still basically animal  
savage, irrational  
governed by urges we  
can't understand...if we  
understood them...and we'll  
understand them...then our free  
will will be at our command

So  
Where  
Is the Tao we must follow  
the road to enlightenment  
spiritual covenant  
sudden Satori or  
path to perfection? Well,  
where do you think it is?  
Just where it always was  
stretched out in front of us

That's  
Why  
Our consciousness matters  
that inner awareness  
with which we can look at  
ourselves in 3rd person  
We are the picture  
that's painting the picture  
We are a song that is  
Singing itself

So  
You  
Can say what you want to say  
We're what we're meant to be  
living our lives is fulfilling our roles but we  
want to have meaning, so  
we have created it, we  
are the ones who define  
our own souls

It  
Does  
Not matter if it was a  
conscious decision that  
lifted us out of the  
primordial agar or  
random, sequential  
a chain of coincidence  
we can't deny that we  
are what we are

We  
Are  
The Lords of the Universe  
Masters of Everything  
we are the owners of  
all we survey, we stand  
here at the threshold, the  
start of the future, a  
future that will be  
whatever we say

## **Cybertreehouse**

I'd like to build a cybertreehouse  
in a spreading cybertree  
on a sunny cyberisland  
in a southern cybersea

We could live on nuts and berries  
it would be a lot of fun  
we could watch the cybersunsets  
when the cyberday is done

High among the cyberbranches  
all our friends would live next door  
in our little cybervillage  
high above the jungle's floor

Everyone you know and love  
and half the folks you've never met  
and quite a few you're going to like  
although you haven't met them yet

complete unto itself, we'd have  
a never ending list of stuff  
No, man, wait, delete the island  
That just isn't big enough

We should build a cyberpalace  
in the heart of cybercity  
where the cyberbeer is good  
and all the cybergirls are pretty

everyone could come and join us  
in our growing cyberstate  
cyberwine in all the glasses  
cybersteak on every plate

Cyberparks and cybergardens  
cyberhouses, cyberschools  
After all, we wouldn't want to  
raise a bunch of cyberfools

It's a simple simulation  
of concrete, plastic, glass and steel  
The fantasy is much more vivid  
for the fact it could be real

I'd like to draw a cybermap  
that leads us to a better place  
draw the blueprint for a heaven  
in real time and in real space

There would be no need for hunger  
there would be no need for war  
We'd have everything we needed  
Isn't that what this is for?

## **Lipstick**

Lipstick may be red as a beet  
on the lips of the girls on Perlová Street

Purple as paint or green as gunk  
on the pouting lips of a petulant punk

Or black as sin, le couleur du mal  
put on by a wannabe femme fatale

Sometimes it's attractive, sometimes it's a waste  
I suppose it's all just a matter of taste

But sweet as the nectar the hummingbird sips  
is the taste of chapstick on my honey's lips

## **My Social Life**

My social life is like a tram  
that runs along the tracks  
I go out and then, some hours later,  
I come back

## Ice Tea

I see a porch with a wooden rail  
painted a pearly white  
where I can sit all afternoon  
and well into the night

Or a hammock where I could be lying  
under a coconut tree  
watching the sun as it slowly sinks  
into the western sea

or perhaps a green expanse of lawn  
somewhere on the side of a hill  
the air is thick with the sweet, rich smell  
of the steaks that are on the grill

I don't need an airline ticket  
to get where I want to be  
all I need is a place to relax  
and a glass of cold ice tea

## **Nail Polish**

I say “you don’t need to paint your nails”  
and sure enough, it never fails  
they paint their nails

I beg them not to dye their hair  
but if they hear me, they don’t care  
they dye their hair

I say “please don’t kill yourself with heels”  
but do they listen to my appeals?  
they wear high heels

They never listen to a word I say  
and that’s O.K.

## **The Speed of Thought**

The pen is always a half step behind  
the thoughts that are racing through your mind  
and you lose your grip as you try to find  
a word, an image, a way to define  
a thought that's moving, that's still in flight  
The faeries in Mr. Blakes garden at night  
How many words did he fail to write  
when the vision came at the speed of light  
We use 10% but there's so much more  
Our need is great, our grasp is poor  
What lies in store behind the door  
what new frontiers, what distant shores  
what golden keys, what tribal lore  
You can churn out novels by the score  
the words you'll never write are more

## **The 13 Different Definitions of the Verb “To Get” (plus a few phrasal verbs)**

Get is not the past tense of go  
Even though it seems it should be so  
You have to go if you going to get  
Somewhere you haven't been to yet

Firstly, “get” means to arrive, as in “she always gets here late”  
Or “I first got to Prague in the Spring of 98”  
Can you tell me how to get there, is it left or is it right  
By the time I get to Phoenix it will be the morning light

Of course, “get” starts some phrasal verbs, get around, get along, get by  
get set, get wet, get late, get dark, get scared, get sick, get better  
Or “to get” can mean to receive: I got a card, I got a letter

“Get” can mean to have: I've got a car, I've got a flat  
she's got a brand new boyfriend and his mother's got a cat  
I've got a brand new pair of roller skates, you've got a brand new key  
I hope you're as happy that I've got you as you are that I've got me

Before we get too far with this I think what we should do  
is get relaxed, get settled down and have a short review  
When he got here he got drunk because he'd got a letter  
“I'm sorry,” she had written, “but I've found somebody better.”

To arrive, to become, to receive, to have, it's getting plain to see  
“Get” gets to be almost anything, you can get “get” to be  
another common meaning is to obtain or to acquire  
get a job, get a raise, get a new TV, get whatever you desire

Sherlock's trying to get a clue, the actor to get a hand  
The boys all want to get a girl, the girls to get a man  
get a prize, get wise, get a little or, get lucky, get a lot  
If you're going to come and get it, come and get it while it's hot

"Get" can mean get started, let's get moving, let's get rolling,  
let's get walking, let's get talking, let's get dancing, let's get strolling  
get up, get down to business, get out of bed, you lazy toad  
let's get to work, let's get this so called show out on the road

"Get" can mean to be allowed, I got to meet the band!  
I got to get his autograph, I got to shake his hand!  
it's like :to have a chance" - I got to go to Disneyland!  
(this poem, by the way, got a whole lot longer than I'd planned)

To get can mean to cause it to be done, to make it so  
I got my girl to wash my clothes, to iron and you know  
she had a lovely flat and I was living there rent free  
I wonder why she suddenly got so pissed off at me

"Get" means to escape: get away, get loose, get clear  
If it's the last thing we ever do, we've got to get out of here  
Or simply "git" where I come from, skedaddle, do not stay  
get out of my face, get off of my case but please, just go away

"Get" can mean to catch, as in the bastard by the throat  
you get a train, you get a plane, you get a ferry or a boat  
or to send: I'll get that report to you, that file, that fax, that note  
or to get can mean to irritate, she always gets my goat

gets on my nerves, gets to me in a way that's quite unpleasant  
not everything we get in life has got to be a present  
we don't always like the things we get, we'd like to give them back  
I've got the blues, I got bad news, I got the shaft, I got the sack

I know this poem is getting rather long and out of hand  
but there's just one more, "to get," you see, can mean to understand  
to get the joke, to get the point, of something that was said  
thanks for being here, I hope you got what I just read

## Synonyms

You could say he's portly, chunky  
chubby, less than trim  
fat, obese or out of shape  
these are synonyms

We need them when we're saying  
all the things that must be said  
but it sounds too bad and so we say  
something else instead

It's cruel to say she dumped you  
kicked you out or left you flat  
split, vamoosed, skedaddled  
and she won't be coming back

to minimize the impact  
you could say you had a spat  
a difference of opinion  
(as between a dog and cat)

You could simply say you're single,  
on your tod, or all alone  
to speak about your solitude  
would elevate the tone

And so you drown your sorrows  
when the liquor brings no bliss  
but you're in the pub with others  
who are simply on the piss

Some imbibe and some partake  
and some will hoist a glass  
some get tipsy, some get drunk  
and some fall on their ass

Shitfaced, schnockered, blotto  
hammered, stinko, loopy, tight  
beyond the legal limit  
pissed as parrots, high as kites

Drunk as skunks and seeing double  
happy, giddy, having fun  
talking loud and causing trouble  
until the evening's done

Some are joyful and elated  
as they're heading for the door  
some are quite inebriated  
passed out on the floor

(all of them intoxicated,  
but some a little more)

But life goes on, you persevere,  
continue, muddle through  
and do the things you know a man  
has really got to do

For every state of being,  
for every time of day  
there are a dozen words or phrases  
you might choose to say

Some are pissy and complaining  
when everything is wrong  
some are mournful and lamenting  
like in a country song

Some are perky, joyous, happy  
when the tune is more upbeat  
some are cheerful, some are snappy  
when you want to move your feet

You can whimper, you can whisper  
you can scream and shout and curse  
but whatever words you choose to use  
it always could be verse

## **You Can Call My Apartment a Flat**

You can call my apartment a flat  
I don't really care about that

You can call the bog a loo  
if that's what you want to do

Stand on queue if you're so inclined  
but where do we draw the line?

I'll go so far, but I'm sorry  
I won't call a truck a lorry

and corn is corn, I will state my defiance  
Mays was that guy who played for the Giants

Aubergine for eggplant? That's O.K.  
I don't really like them anyway

But french fries are french fries, if you want chips  
they come in a bag and they're meant for dips

Belly or tummy, it matters little  
but that's a belly button, there in the middle

and fanny is just an unusable word  
unless we can agree on what part is referred to

A bonnet goes on a baby's head  
that's a hood on the front of your car instead

Speaking of cars, that's a trunk in the rear  
boots are for walking, that should be clear

and you might think we've got no class  
but petrol is too refined for gas

Your Hoover may be quite the Lux  
but my vacuum cleaner also sucks

and speaking of sucking, it would be a real drag  
if you wanted a cig, and you got a fag

It would make a woman angry, I don't  
know how you'd face her

If she said to use a rubber  
and you reached for an eraser

There is a simple solution to this linguistic plight  
You all could just admit that we are right

## **Five Words**

If I learn just five words a day  
that'll never be enough  
to name the flowers and trees and birds  
and fish and all that stuff

If I only learn ten words each day  
I'll never comprehend  
the range of her emotions  
and the signals that she sends

One hundred words a day will not  
explain, decode, unwind  
the grammar of the universe  
the meaning of mankind

Perhaps it's just as futile  
as a castle in the sand  
but it doesn't take that much to say  
I want to understand

## **Salt Water Music**

The ocean rocked, the ocean rolled  
across the lifeless planet's face  
there was liquid, there was light  
and there was movement in this place

The crashing surf, the rising swell  
the love of ocean for the shore  
a shallow pool, a single cell  
a thing that wasn't there before

The world has changed a lot, of course  
since that amoebic virgin birth  
but the sun still rules the heavens  
and the ocean rules the earth

We have grown and we have changed  
far removed from ancient oceans  
Still, it shouldn't seem so strange  
that we should feel the ancient motions

The rhythms of the human heart  
are like the waves that break apart  
Having risen from the mud  
we feel the ocean in our blood

## **Reality Rhymes**

Is this infernal or sublime?  
Depends upon your point of view  
There is no rest, but at the core  
nothing's ever really changed  
We try to break out, go beyond!  
To pass the point of no return!  
The line extends, and soon we find  
it is reality that rhymes

## **Puddle**

In view of the reflection that they make  
a puddle is the equal of a lake

## **How to Win Debates**

You've made your point  
you've made it clear  
I've heard all that I want to hear

It should be plain  
for you to see  
that I quite simply don't agree

Excuse me for being  
so abrupt  
but it's my turn to interrupt

I'm sure you'll see my point of view  
if I can talk louder and faster than you

## **The Streetlight**

The streetlight shines down  
spotlighting the falling flakes  
the snow must go on

## The Urge

The Myths, the religions  
the legends, the lies  
the clothes that we wear  
are a thin disguise

The buildings, the cars  
the web that we weave  
all of the things  
in which we believe

have been created  
have been designed  
by human hand  
by human mind

The natural world  
has been replaced  
but the natural urges  
have not been erased

First among these is  
the urge to survive  
to defend one's existence  
to grow and to thrive

To thrive, to grow  
to profit, to gain  
to seek the pleasure  
avoid the pain

Accumulate  
a lot of stuff  
It's not enough  
It's not enough

There's an itch, a yearning  
an inner demand  
to explain it all  
to understand

But it's all so big  
and we're so small  
How can we possibly  
get it all?

And so the left hand  
seeks the right  
there's an urge to merge  
to link up, to unite

The yin and the yang  
the dark and the light  
the heat of the day  
and the dark of the night

Like a key fits a lock  
like a foot fills a boot  
the water is driven  
to find the root

The man and the woman  
the need , the desire  
the passions, the need  
of the ice for the fire

There's a need of each part  
to be part of a whole  
to join with another  
is good for the soul

## **The Medium is the Message**

The medium is the message  
that's what the wise man said  
How did that thought you're thinking  
ever get inside your head?

If you read it in the paper  
and you think that makes it true  
your experience with papers  
is the only thing that's new

If you heard it on the T.V.  
or on the radio  
the only things you're learning  
are what they want you to know

If you heard it on the Internet  
your case is very slight  
there are a lot of people on the net  
who aren't all that bright

I might be getting cynical  
I guess that's how it goes  
but I only believe my own two eyes  
and sometimes not even those

The medium is the message  
that's what the wise man said  
How did that thought you're thinking  
ever get inside your head?

## **Toy Guns**

Kids have fun  
when they play with guns  
with a rat-a-tat-tat  
Take that, take that!  
It's O.K., it's no big deal  
They aren't old enough to kill  
for real

## **Journey to Ixtlan**

We took a journey to Ixtlan  
We opened the doors of perception  
Was that the road to enlightenment  
or the path of self-deception?

Have I learned anything at all  
on this flight of understanding?  
I don't know, but I'm low on fuel  
and I'm coming in for a landing

## **Life at the Improv**

If the world's a stage, as Shakespeare said  
is there a script I haven't read?

That explains my role, contains my lines  
or do I have to improvise?

Does the one who has the most toys win?  
Or perhaps the one with the fewest sins?

If you pledge your life to silver and gold  
you will have comfort when you are old  
a beautiful house and a color TV  
a life of pleasure, a life of ease  
but if gold is the substance of your soul  
the ferry man will take that toll

You can study hard, read lots of books  
it's not as easy as it looks  
you may learn a lot of stuff  
you may learn that learning's not enough  
Though wisdom is a worthy goal  
You've learned the part, and missed the whole

Or you could do a lot of deeds  
planting gardens, pulling weeds  
building buildings, writing books  
but someday you will have to look  
back at all the things you've done  
and wish that you had had more fun

You could live for fun and games  
and blind your eyes on beauty's flame  
love and laughter, song and dance  
may well ensnare you in their trance  
it may be gentle, it may be sweet  
but still, it leaves you incomplete

Money, knowledge, success and love  
or E, for all of the above  
there's so much withing our reach  
that we should try a bit of each  
a little sample from the plate  
some to love and some to hate

So, when we exit from the stage  
we leave our mark upon the page  
the work of our lifetime is writing our role  
as we struggle to achieve our goals  
frozen in time in the world of today  
the work of a lifetime is also the play

## **Space Station Alpha (Saturday, November 11th, 2000)**

They're calling it Space Station Alpha now  
because it's the very first one  
They're calling it Space Station Alpha now  
the journey has begun

Alpha's as big as a jumbo jet  
but Beta will make it look small  
Gamma will be bigger still  
and Delta will dwarf them all

When we look up at the sky at night  
in 2045  
Epsilon will be  
the brightest object in the sky

They'll be as big as shopping malls  
and it won't seem so strange  
to hear somebody say  
they have a home upon LaGrange

Still, we'll keep on building  
ever better, ever greater  
there will be resorts of brand new sorts  
on Zeta, Eta and Theta

Iota, Kappa, Lambda, Mu  
will hover over Mars  
while Nu and Xi and Omicron  
will take off for the stars

Pi and Rho will boldly go  
where none have gone before  
and Sigma, the enigma  
will accomplish even more

Station Tau won't have the flaws  
of these preceding stations  
and Upsilon will carry on  
the great investigation

Phi and Chi and Psi might try  
to break the speed of light  
so that the one they'll call Omega  
could come back tomorrow night

and when the 25th station's built  
to name it something new  
Oh, what the hell, it's just as well  
Let's call it Alpha 2

## **The Bower**

Arches and trellises covered with flowers  
a place designed for summer hours  
when summer's gone, they'll still be there  
Skeletons in the winter air

## **The Attic**

Like sweeping out the attic  
of its cobwebs and its bugs  
sometimes I try to clear my mind  
of alcohol and drugs  
but when it's neat and tidy  
I find to my despair  
there really wasn't all that much up there

## **Future Imperfect**

When I was a lad I read lots of stories  
of space exploration and all its glories  
of people who came from distant stars  
of gleaming cities and flying cars  
The future seemed like quite an amazing place  
There'd be cities under the sea and in outer space  
We'd have unlimited solar power  
New York to Chicago would take one hour  
by monorail, I thought it was planned  
they already had one at Disneyland  
The future was bright, it was understood  
Some people even said we could  
control the weather, but they lied  
Quite frankly, it's cold as hell outside  
There is no bubble city on Mars  
and everybody's still driving cars  
Robots have fallen short of my wishes  
I still have to do the dishes  
Sometimes I almost feel like crying  
I know the calendar isn't lying  
The future has arrived at last  
and looks a whole lot like the past

## **She Asked if I Loved Her**

She asked if I loved her, I should have said yes  
It's what she wanted to hear, I guess

I didn't want to say it, if it wasn't so  
and the plain truth was, I didn't know

I hesitated, I waited too long  
she said, "If you can't say it, there's something wrong."

I said "Honey, I need you, I have to, I must..."  
She said "Honey, that isn't love, that's lust"

I blew it, I know, but it's really absurd  
how much meaning we put into one little word

There is love that is fickle and fleeting and fast  
or love slow and steady, determined to last

There is love that's one sided, and love that's unspoken  
and love that lies dormant and needs to be woken

There's love of a challenge and love of the game  
There's love of the other and love of the same

There are girls who love girls and boys who love boys  
and some who love leather and some who love toys

There is love based on friendship and love based on trust  
There is love based on longing and love based on lust

There is love that is tender and love that is mild  
and love that a parent has for a child

Or a boy for a dog or a friend for a friend  
The list goes on, love never ends

There is love of great music and love of great art  
There is love in your eyes, there is love in your heart

Every kind of love is good  
and I never get as much as I wish that I could

## **Faces Carved in Stone**

Faces carved in stone  
silent, cold, expressionless  
reflecting our own

## **Lost in the City**

Lost in the city  
Lost in the rain  
Lost in contemplation  
I'm getting wet  
but it isn't yet  
an uncomfortable sensation

## **Monkey**

The feel of the bark  
the green of the leaves  
the scent of the jungle  
a moving breeze

are a long, long way from these iron bars  
these shitty, gray walls  
this concrete floor

I've never known what it means to be free  
but I know this isn't home to me

## **Time Travel**

For traveling into the future  
I have a simple plan  
I'll keep on going one second per second  
and get just as far as I can

## Just Another Day

I didn't want to get up out of bed  
the other day, a couple days ago  
there was no particular place I had to go  
A single thought kept running through my head

“It doesn't really matter if I stay,  
after all, it's just another day”

Monday, Tuesday, what's there in a name?  
Sunday doesn't know it's set aside  
The world just turns and takes it in its stride  
allowing each and every one the same

but there's so much the calendar doesn't say  
There's no such thing as “just another day”

Weather wet and cold or warm and dry  
the patterns change - they twist, they turn, they toss  
The whimsical wind is wafting clouds across  
the great big lava lamp up in the sky

Sometimes it's mostly blue, sometime's it's gray  
There's no such thing as just another day

And all that's just the changing of the scene  
each actor has to improvise their role  
each player aiming for a different goal  
and a lot of things can happen in between

So many factors coming into play  
There's no such thing as just another day

There's a world contained in every point of view  
a mystery that has yet to be revealed  
a piece of fruit that's waiting to be peeled  
The day will be defined by what you do

Each sculptor molds a different piece of clay  
There's no such thing as just another day

**I.P. Pavlova, May 15th, 2000**

I get off the train and start to walk  
toward the exit, moving with the flock  
I can see the people still on board  
in a moment, I won't see them any more

Lined up like the beads of an abacus in a row  
Faces of people I will never know

**Bertramka, July 23rd, 2000**

From the top of the hill we enjoyed the view  
the grass was green, the sky was blue  
and in between the earth and sky  
we went walking, you and I

## **The Solution to All of the World's Problems**

Give jobs to the jobless  
and aim to the aimless  
Building homes for the homeless  
Cooking food for the hungry  
Pouring drinks for the thirsty  
Educating the uneducated  
Entertaining the bored  
Massaging the weary  
Loving the lonely  
Driving the restless  
Curing the sick  
Planting forests  
Planting gardens  
Raising crops  
Raising children  
Raising consciousness  
Raising the tone of the conversation  
Doing the undone  
Exploring the unknown  
Filling the world with art  
Filling the air with sound  
Anything, anything at all  
instead of killing each other

## Millenium

We're spinning as we're turning round the sun  
in 24 hours, each and every time  
one year and then we're back where we began  
it's a pattern, it's a system, it's a rhyme

About a hundred thousand years ago  
we marked the seasons and we named the days  
planted seeds and stayed to watch them grow  
got a bit more settled in our ways

Began to shape the earth to our desires  
killed for profit - killed for power - killed for fun  
scarred the earth with fences and with fires  
as year by year we turned around the sun

Somehow, we've managed to survive this far  
the sun still shines upon us as we dance  
Weak and undeserving though we are  
each day presents us with another chance

Spinning, spinning through the cosmic night  
We've got another thousand years to get it right

## Swimming Lesson

That summer I was only 5 years old  
the water looked so deep and felt so cold  
so I held on to the shallow edge of the pool  
kicked my legs and thought that that was cool  
One sunny day, I got a terrible shock  
My big brother threw me off a dock

I gasped, I gulped, I thought that I would drown  
I felt the world had been turned upside down  
I couldn't see a thing before my eyes  
the sky was gone, but much to my surprise  
I popped up to the surface pretty quick  
I learned to move my arms and how to kick

Well, that was a pretty nasty thing to do  
but on that day I learned a thing or two  
You're halfway there the moment you begin  
so put aside your fears and dive right in  
In sports, at work and especially with women  
If you ain't in over your head, then you ain't swimmin'

I'm in too deep, but don't you worry 'bout me  
over my head is where I want to be

## **The Universal Puzzle**

In the universal puzzle  
all the pieces have to fit  
the only trouble is, we haven't found them all as yet

There are some that are so tiny  
they are hidden from our sight  
and some so contradictory  
we don't know which is right  
and some we have discarded  
that we thought we wouldn't need  
and some we can't imagine  
and some that we can't read  
There are some that seem irrelevant  
why should we even care?  
and some that do not seem to match  
the other pieces there

it might take a billion years to work  
this puzzle to the end  
That's O.K.  
We've got the time to spend

## **The Prince of Prague**

I don't fit in the blank spaces  
I'm not that kind of guy  
at least 50 percent of the shit on these forms  
I mark "that does not apply"

I have a restless spirit  
I have a wandering mind  
when I take a 12 step program  
I take it two steps at a time

Perhaps it's avoidance behavior  
Perhaps it's missing the point  
but pass those peanuts over here  
and roll me another joint

My biggest fault is ego  
'cause I can plainly see  
that I am better than anyone else  
who's not as good as me

I look down from my balcony table  
at the people down below  
all of the amateur actors  
in an improvisational show

I like to ride in the back of the bus  
and pretend it's a limousine  
you can ride along if you like  
I'm arrogant, not mean

Life's not an uphill struggle  
we don't even have to climb  
the world keeps turning under our feet  
a single day at a time

If the universe is infinite  
however you slice the pie  
I have the perfect point of view  
The center is the I

I'm glad you all could be here  
ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls  
jso I could have this chance to say  
"You're welcome in my world"

## **The Prisoners**

They're tenured, they have got their chair  
in their office, at the store  
behind the bar or at the door  
They aren't going anywhere

Even some of the things they say  
Their words, their gestures and their quirks  
because they've learned to use what works  
remain the same from day to day

They've found a place to park their mind  
a harbor, safe from winds of change  
where nothing's bent and nothing's strange  
a prison of their own design

And here they sit,  
year in, year out  
and mark the seasons as they pass  
Each day is very like the last  
a choice of comfort over doubt

But...

There's something missing from their face  
They have forgotten how to smile  
and like a no longer relevant file  
all trace of humor's been erased

There's something missing from their eyes  
They know the future all too well  
and like the prisoner in his cell  
they mark the days until they die

I'll tell you now and it's a fact  
I never want to be like that

## **Diary**

It wasn't anything I said  
or even how I said it  
but my baby found my diary  
and she read it

There could be no redemption  
couldn't say I didn't mean it  
but I was sincerely sorry  
that she'd seen it

A diary is as dangerous  
as what you put inside it  
Like a loaded gun at home  
you have to hide it

## **Rainbow**

The light flows through the water  
that is falling through the air  
a rainbow is a picture  
on a screen that isn't there

## The Trolley

We were in a crowd of people  
waiting for a light  
I barely even noticed she was there

I guess she was a gipsy  
Her hair and skin were dark  
and most folks here are rather pale and fair

She had a wooden trolley  
with a suitcase flat on top  
held on by a bungee cord or two

With wheels of yellow plastic  
it didn't look too hot  
but I suppose it was the best that she could do

The light turned green, the traffic stopped  
We all began to cross  
She wasn't there and so I looked around

I could see the twisted yellow plastic  
bent beyond repair  
lying there quite useless on the ground

a crowd of people gathered round  
and they were dark like her  
I can't tell you how this story ends

I had someplace I had to be  
and so I carried on  
but I was glad to see that she had friends

## **Skylight**

There is a skylight up here in the loft  
so I have a good view of the sky  
the snow's coming down and it's coming real soft  
it's an image that pleases the eye

There's a sauce on the stove that has scented the air  
with a smell that is good to the nose  
the carpet is deep and my feet they are bare  
it's a texture that pleases the toes

I have no obligations and no place to go  
there are plenty of books on the shelf  
I think I'll just sit here and look at the snow  
It's good to be good to yourself

## **Michelle**

You could have gone either way that night  
there were two ways you could have gone  
the tram came quick, you took your pick  
you went ahead and got on

I was going home alone  
You were going out with a friend  
We briefly kissed, I nearly missed  
The End

## **I spy with my little eye**

I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with apple pie  
long, wooden tables out by the lake  
potato salad and chocolate cake  
baked brown sugar on brown baked beans  
and more fried chicken than you've ever seen

I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with touch the sky  
up in the mountains, where things are so pretty  
far from the traffic, far from the city  
far from the pressure, far from the crowd  
things are so quiet, up here in the clouds

I spy, with my little eye  
something beginning with let's get high  
smoke a little reefer just to feed the brain  
then a little acid just to go insane  
look at all the dots on the TV screen  
and try to figure out just what they mean

I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with me, oh my  
I caught my breath, I turned to stare  
when I saw that girl with the long, brown hair  
ain't nothin' better lookin' than a good looking girl  
anywhere in this beautiful world

I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with don't be shy  
walk on over and ask her to dance  
you never can tell if you don't take the chance  
offer a drink, or just say hello  
the worst that she can say is no

I spy with my little eye  
something beginning with boy's don't cry  
riding the night bus, all alone  
couldn't even get the number to her mobile phone  
sometimes you win, sometimes you lose  
sometimes you end up singin' the blues

## Say a Prayer for Robert Johnson

When he went down to the crossroads  
he was looking for a sound  
and he didn't have to look so very far

He could hear a whispering in the wind  
a rumbling in the ground  
he could feel it in the strings of his guitar

Well, say a prayer for Robert Johnson  
say a prayer for that man's soul  
because his bargain with the devil  
created Rock and Roll

Well, he played it in the shanties  
in the Mississippi night  
and he played it round the fires, 'neath the stars

And he played it on the corners  
in the cities and the towns  
and he played it in the juke joints and the bars

Say a prayer for Robert Johnson  
say a prayer for that man's soul  
because his bargain with the devil  
created Rock and Roll

Robert Johnson died one day  
but his music stuck around  
like a shadow in the Mississippi night

The devil tried to keep it  
but he couldn't keep it down  
and Rock and Roll began to see the light

When a white boy out in Texas  
and one in Tupelo  
started in to lay that rhythm down

They got it in the record stores  
and on the radio  
and Rock and Roll was heard the whole world round

Say a prayer for Robert Johnson  
Say a prayer for that man's soul  
because his bargain with the devil  
created Rock and Roll

Well, they say the devil taught him  
they say he went to hell  
and there's no call to think that they would lie

But we have the devil's music  
and it's doing pretty well  
because we know that Rock and Roll will never die

So say a prayer for Robert Johnson  
Say a prayer for that man's soul  
because his bargain with the devil  
created Rock and Roll

## **The Farmer in the Dell**

The farmer in the dell went down to the city  
'cause everybody'd told him that the women were so pretty  
so, he met a little woman and he took her for a wife  
and he took her to the dell to start a new life

The summers got hot and the winters got colder  
and the farmer and his wife got a little bit older  
They raised 'em up a daughter, such a pretty little girl  
with big blue eyes and long blonde curls

Just turned 13, they don't come no hotter  
than a wide-eyed innocent farmer's daughter  
she never saw that there was trouble brewin'  
and the farmer in the dell didn't know what he was doin'

One day the farmer's daughter went down to the creek  
and he hid behind some bushes and he took himself a peek  
When his daughter took her clothes off, his heart began to pound  
so he reached out and he grabbed her and he threw her on the ground

Well, the daughter took offense at this, but the farmer paid no heed  
because the farmer in the dell had a mighty urgent need  
but her mother came a-runnin, that is the farmer's wife  
and the wife took a pitchfork and she took the farmer's life

and they chopped up his body, and they threw it in the well  
and that's what became of the farmer in the dell

## **There's Something About a Matinee**

When you jump into a swimming pool  
the water's deep, the water's cool  
when you get out and face the sky  
the air is warm, the air is dry

There's something about a matinee  
You enter, from the brightest day  
forget the world two hours, and then  
you come walking out again  
and it always seems so strange  
to notice that the sky has changed  
the heat of the sun and the glare of the light  
have been replaced by the cool, dark night

From time to time, from place to place  
the world presents a different face

## **Five**

### **Sight**

Matter is energy, energy light  
We know existence through our sight

If I were suddenly struck blind  
and lost the image  
would I lose my mind?

### **Hearing**

Whether faint, or loud and clear  
each sound's a signal that we hear  
across the air  
from here to there  
Our interpretation of these vibrations  
is the basis of communication

We get the signals  
whether or not we wish  
the ear is a very primitive  
satellite dish

### **Smell**

Smell is perhaps the most visceral sense  
the feelings it causes are quite intense  
a steak on the grill makes you salivate  
but other smells are not so great

## **Taste**

We have to eat to stay alive  
and we may grow and even thrive  
but food consumed in haste  
lacks taste

A meal that's well prepared  
is like a song that's been well sung  
taste is the music of the tongue

## **Touch**

The tongue, the eyes, the ears, the nose  
are lovely methods, I suppose,  
to let the information in  
but let us not forget the skin

for directness of perception, there is much  
that can be said for the humble sense of touch

## **The Westward Moving Line**

The westward moving line can move no more  
broke like a wave upon the western shore  
though mystery has left the western sky  
the westering spirit hasn't really died

The globe has been explored from north to south  
each river to it's source up from it's mouth  
the question is arising more and more  
where is left, where no one's been before?

The new explorer's dream, the quest, the goal  
is to seek the inner secrets of the soul  
and there are many pathways that we try  
and some of them may get there, by and by

Some do drugs and some of us read cards  
Some miss the point and some just try too hard  
in meditation or hypnotic trance  
There's ecstasy for some in tantric dance

Some try to study and investigate  
to analyze, record and calculate  
but solid facts have no more weight than vapor  
the soul has never yet been put on paper

Some pin their hopes upon the ancient gods  
Quite frankly, I don't think much of their odds  
Some of them play cymbals as they chant  
and wear long, orange robes instead of pants

Shapes and symbols can be seen as signs:  
the pyramids, the power points and lines  
Regressive therapy or altered states  
Some take 12 steps, some say 5 or 8

These tools and little tricks have been designed  
to help us find the mind within the mind  
the garden that's behind the secret door  
the chamber where the secret treasure's stored

A deep blue lake so clear, so cool, so good  
in the darkened middle of the wood  
there reside the creatures of the deep  
who come out to play when you're asleep

I haven't found it but I don't despair  
I'm close enough to know that it is there

## **The Signal Flare**

Like a firefly in a jar  
or a fish in a little glass bowl  
we're trapped within our atmosphere  
and there's little doubt we're staying here  
we can't reach the nearest star  
we're not anywhere near that far

There are other world's, all right  
we can see their suns  
wobble just a hair  
as their spinning there  
information that's blurry and light  
with our newly developing sight

Through the void so black and clear  
our sun could be seen the same  
a beacon light  
through the endless night  
that's blinking "we are here"  
and has been for the last 5 billion years