

The Guru Kalehuru
and
Other Poems

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Willie Watson

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Introduction

All of the poems in this book rhyme. Some would say that this sets it apart from most modern poetry. I'm not so sure of that. Songs rhyme, as well as many greeting cards, bumper stickers, T shirts and bathroom graffiti. Despite this rich pool of creativity, when most people think of modern poetry they tend to think of the non-rhyming type, all filled with ghosts of weird gangster angels tumbling down the coin slots of eternity, or whatever.

I'm happy for that attitude, because it places rhyme in a niche market. Which is, I suppose, why I do it.

There are other advantages, though. Rhymes are mnemonic, and I certainly hope that you will not only read these poems, but remember them. Also, it lets me know when the poem is finished. When I can't think of any more words that rhyme, then it's done.

One of the greatest advantages of rhyme, though, is one that I have discovered recently, that is, in the course of writing this book. Like a walk in the woods on hallucinogenic drugs, I pursue paths I might have otherwise overlooked. One rhyme leads to another, which leads to another, until wham-o, there's an idea down on paper that, as far as I can tell, I didn't think of. So, whereas I used to write only to express my ideas, now I very often write to *find* my ideas.

It has been said that there is no such thing as an original thought. That is, all our knowledge is based on things people have told us or we have read, and any thought that comes is therefore not original. Well, there's no getting around that.

What rhyming poetry allows me, as a writer, to do is to randomize my thoughts. If they don't grow directly from the compost heap of my own cultural waste products, then maybe they're at least halfway original.. I hope.

But are they meaningful? Well, they are to me. I learned a lot in the course of writing them. I don't know if they'll be meaningful to you or not.

Only one way to find out, now, ain't there?

Willie Watson
Prague, 2002

*I would especially like to thank my wife, Helena,
and our friend Bill Karnegies for their help in the
production of this book.*

*This book is dedicated
to the memory of
Alex J. Barber.*

December 14, 1971-January 27, 2002

He was the best of us.

Elegy for Alex

*Here in this town where people come and go
You meet a lot of people passing through
Most leave no impression, but you know
Some make a mark, and one of them was you*

*You played on your guitar and sang your songs
The power of your voice could move a crowd
You sang with feeling and your voice was strong
It suited those of us who like it loud*

*As I'm walking down these cobbled streets
Or sitting in some smoky bar at night
I know that it will never be complete
I think of all the songs you'll never write*

*What does it mean, to say you died too young
Is eighty years enough, or eighty five?
Most who live so long don't do as much
As you accomplished when you were alive*

*The songs you sang still echo in my head
Alex, I'm so sorry that you're dead*

A Modern Love Story

I met her at a discotheque
Tall and thin and blonde and Czech
I looked at her, she looked at me
I knew that it just had to be
We danced all night, we partied hard
And in the end, we traded cards
I went home, my head was reeling
I could have danced upon the ceiling
I felt like I would go insane
Her image printed on my brain
Her long blonde hair, her big green eyes
Her lips, her breasts, her calves, her thighs
It wasn't IF, but rather WHEN
I would call her up again
I knew I shouldn't play the fool
That overeager wasn't cool
That I should wait a day or two
Then call her up to say "What's new?"
But I wasn't thinking, I had no choice
I simply had to hear her voice
I called her up the very next day
To say the things I had to say
She wasn't in, would you believe
I was disappointed but relieved
I left a message on her machine
To say that I would like to see
Her again, sometime, if she was free
To spend a little time with me
She didn't feel the same, I guess
She brushed me off with an SMS

One Sunny Day on Seifertova Street

I saw her walking, I had to stop
The girl in the light blue halter top
She was young and in prime condition
My head just turned of its own volition
I stood, transfixed, but it wasn't long
Until another one came along
Tall and tan and blonde and lean
Wearing a pair of tight blue jeans
My head was turning back and forth
From east to west, from south to north
I know it's rude, I hate to stare
But when I see them walking there
I forget about the sights of the city
The women here are just so damned pretty
But there's no need to stop and gape
They're growing here as thick as grapes
That tender fruit that makes the wine
Sweet young girls who look so fine

A Beautiful Mind

Most people find it difficult enough
To go to work each day and deal with things
Like traffic, bills and all the other stuff
That daily life inevitably brings

By concentrating on the daily grind
By diligence, and focussing too tight
We dull our senses, slowly we go blind
Or simply close our eyes against the light

Outgrow imaginary childhood friends
And leave the shores of never-never land
Instead of understanding to pretend
We accept, and then pretend to understand

Is it an aberration or a gift?
To see more than two sides to every coin
To float above the clouds, to catch the drift
Is that a poet...or a paranoid?

Self-delusion, or a lucky flair?
For seeing things that aren't really there

The Polychromaticity of Green

Some are dark, and some are light
Some are pale, and some are bright

Different plants, of different ages
Different species, different stages

Each bird and bug can spot their home
To them it isn't monochrome

But quite complex, this simple scene
A thousand different shades of green

Watson's Theory of Rhyme

You need something to rhyme with sugar and spice
It automatically comes out nice
Is that just a random roll of the dice?
You need something to rhyme with a knock at the door
Look no farther than nevermore

You need something that rhymes with knife and fork
That leads you straight to sizzling pork
At a Chinese restaurant in New York
The scent from the vent, the sizzling meat
And the gaudy lights down on Lafayette Street

You need something that rhymes with coffee and cream
Let me tell you about last night's dream
Things are never the way that they seem
I dreamed that last night was already today
So I already said what I'm going to say

You need a rhyme for a spot on the wall
And you think of the paint that's out in the hall
Peeling and cracking and starting to fall
And the smell of urine on the stairs
And wonder why nobody seems to care

You need a rhyme for crackers and cheese
Best of all is "Thank you, please"
As the sun drops down behind the trees
There's beer in the cooler, there's wine in the glass
The kids are out playing, on the grass

You need a rhyme for a shirt and a tie
And so you think of a well-dressed guy
Eating ice cream and apple pie
He sees the girl in the bright red skirt
And drops the ice cream on his shirt

You need a rhyme for rhythm and blues
I'm sure that you'll find one by watching the news
So many sorrows from which we can choose
It may be ironic, it's certainly sad
But we don't want to hear it, if it isn't bad

You need a rhyme for whiskey and coke
That's so easy, it's almost a joke
You toke on some smoke and you damned near choke
How can your head spin round so fast
When you're just sitting there on your ass

You need a rhyme for burger and fries
Vanilla shake and apple pie'll
Make ya fat, and that's no lie
Oil, sugar, fat and cream
There's a nightmare, in the dream

You need a rhyme for a falling leaf
There's the autumn wind that brings relief
Or a sense of ending, a sense of grief
There are so many things that you could say
In the setting of an autumn day

You need a rhyme for a walk in the park
So either her hair, or the sky must be dark
Warm and romantic, or cold and stark
Every fork in the rhyming trail
Will set the scene for a different tale

Let the words go rolling round
And you may find that you have found
Significant meaning in parallel sound
Follow the rhymes and let them show
The different ways your mind can go

A Tale of Two Men

**One man always told the truth
The other always lied
Both of them, deservedly
Were thoroughly despised**

Revelation

Lordy, lordy, I need a vacation
From all of the lies and the misinformation
The doubt, the confusion , the stress and frustration
The boredom and the desperation
I don't understand this situation
And when I need some edification
More information, clarification
I get vagueness, abstraction and obfuscation
Rationalization and justification
Pedantry and pontification
I must be tuned in to the wrong station
I'm not looking for confrontation
But what is wrong with simplification
Clear and simple communication
Classification and explanation
Illustration and amplification
And even intelligent extrapolation
The problem is compartmentalization
The fragmentation of interrelations
Leading to paranoid alienation
And the irrational ostracization
Of any kind of aberration
Always seeking moderation
Avoiding embarrassing deviations
That could cause us complications
Such is the soul of our civilization
The paralyzation through ossification
Of race and religion, of tongue and of nation
But despite all of our protestations
There is no alleviation
So, one day, in consternation
I went for a walk, some recreation

Stopped when I needed some relaxation
Sat myself down on the lawn of creation
Looking for some kind of inspiration
A bit of psychic rejuvenation
Thought I'd do a little meditation
Spend some time in contemplation
Break this mental constipation
Then I felt a strange sensation
No, it wasn't a hallucination
It was more like a realization
Sudden Satori, illumination!
There's no need for resignation
To constant social aggravation
What we need is cooperation
Leave out the hype and the accusations
The innuendoes and diminutions
Propaganda and false appellations
Beatifications and demonizations
Stratification breeds separation
And separation isolation
What we need is collaboration
Organic, spontaneous coordination
Perhaps a little experimentation
Open, friendly, human relations
This is a time for celebration! Ecstasy and jubilation!
Cover the world with good vibrations
A flood, a deluge, an inundation
Of joy, contentment and elation

Stromovka

The flowers in Stromovka Park
Leave their perfume in the air
A pleasant path to follow
For the people who are there

Street Sounds

The noise of the cars on Konevova Street
Is as steady as a stream
And when I go to sleep at night
They're driving through my dreams

If I had a country place,
somewhere beside a brook
a quiet place to meditate
and try to write a book

No screeching tires, no blaring horns
No sound of grinding gears
I wouldn't have a thing to fill
The space between my ears

Cobblestones

Cobblestones are pretty
They evoke that old world feel
Of a simpler, bygone era
But they're hell on girls with heels

Comments on Coleridge

Somewhere in a far off land
That borders on eternity
A mighty leader raised his hand
And halted there his caravan
And said, "I think I see

A palace that goes on for miles
Standing in this empty space
Ornate and opulent in style
A blooming garden, lush and wild
Is all around the place

A garden filled with fruit and fish
No longer do we need to roam
For here is everything we wish
A place of ecstasy and bliss
We'll call "The Pleasure Dome"

It has happened now and then
In legend, history and art
The golden vision in the air
That suddenly is posted there
As from a world apart

We know from ancient Aztec lore
How nomads in the burning sand
Tired and hungry, weak and poor
Could see an eagle there before
Them in that desert land

A serpent clutched between his claws
They stopped, and built a city there
A place of beauty, and of awe
And they had calendars, and laws
And wealth beyond compare

One ancient European day
An old man stood upon a hill
And looked around, and said, “ O.K.
This looks good, I think I’ll stay”
His people live there still

Why do some see other worlds
Where most of us see day and night
And either stumble in the dark
Or greet the dawn, and in that spark
Are blinded by the light

But pictured in the golden beams
And plainly hid from those who seek
The Princess sitting by the stream
Or Samuel Coleridge in his dream
Get a sudden peek

He drifted to the other side
But in his mind, he clutched a line
A palace, and ten miles of ground
With a wall that went around
And that became the sign

That led him down a forest trail
He saw a woman singing there
A lovely sound, a lovely sight
A wench as black as anthracite
La negra dulcinea

He left the mundane world behind
His bread crumbs were consumed by crows
To seek the treasures he might find
In the darkness of his mind
The path that no one knows

But with the maiden for his guide
They walked along the babbling brook
Sweetly singing by his side
And mirrored in the stream he spied
Reflections of his book

Sleep! The temporary tomb
The little death that comes each night
Is like returning to the womb
Just floating in a blackened room
And sheltered from the light

But oh! That deep and dark impassioned pit!
At the center of the sacred ground
Our dream and nightmare both: Alas!
That tangled, teasing patch of grass
Above a moistened mound

The farmers blade that cleaves the earth
And heaves aside the wet spring dirt
To bare the spot to take the seed
The coming generation's need
The Goddess parts her skirt

As drones drawn to the petaled palace
We'd sell our souls to pay the price
We seek, we grope, we stretch, we reach,
To touch, explore, to press, to breach
The gates of Paradise

The Chasm's walls are closely pressed
Bodies bathed in sweat and steam
The moving thought can't be expressed
Somewhere in the stream of consciousness
Is the consciousness of the stream

There! The river Alph begins
A fountain gushing from the plain
With a sharp and sudden shock
Throwing dirt, and throwing rocks
That then turned into rain

Then the rain turned into wheat
And through that wild chaotic sky
He could see that spreading flood
Slipping softly through the mud
Now and for all time

Then the ground turned into green
And pleasant wooded forest lands
Tall, wild lawns and apple trees
With here and there a honeybee
And flowers on every hand

Everywhere the river turned
Life erupted on it's shores
Alph, the spring, the seed, the germ
The DNA inside the sperm
And more, and more, and more

The lust for life is rampant, brute
And tends to go beyond the lines
The randy piper played his flute
There was grain, and there was fruit
To press for summer wine

But in the seeds of that sweet flow
There is the knowledge that it ends
The mighty river someday goes
To endless caverns down below
The night that never ends

On and on the river runs
He sees the dome, upon the hill
And as the river runs its course
And he is held within its force
He longs to be there still

The current's running swifter now
The river's walls are steep and bare
Its will is greater than his will
But that's O.K., he knows there's still
A garden growing there

The dreamer woke: the dream was lost
The dreamer salvaged bits and parts
But his connection had been severed
In a moment, lost forever
To the world of art

Curtains

First thing in the morning as I see the sunlight streaming
Softly through my bedroom window as I'm lying half asleep
In the everlasting daydream of the infinite regression
Where we choose the upper atmosphere or crawl back to the
deep

The flowers on my curtains have a geometric pattern
That does not include the texture or the color or the scent
Yet they spoke to me this morning to relate their simple
version
Of the universal messages original intent

We are living an abstraction of the world we see around us
Reduced to shape and symbol in the fabric of our being
What is the relation of a flower of creation
In a natural situation to the flower I am seeing?

It's a vague interpretation, a minor fabrication
Of the complicated glory which we think we have defined
Running down the channels from the jungle of existence
Which are flowing from the fountain of a fresh and restless
mind

Art is information, it's the soul of civilization
But from essence to abstraction is a long and tangled way
The language and the landscape, because we've lost the
landscape,
In our version of reality have come to seem the same
Nature tends to nurture and the present to the future
In a thread of continuity, from cradle to the grave
So art has turned to nature, as the lesser to the greater,
Ever since the bison was first painted on the cave

Self-Criticism

Everybody talks about music, books and art
The play they're writing, or an exhibition
They sit around cafes a lot and drink and bitch and fart
A warped expression of their blurry vision

There's a whole lot of ambiguity
Within the expat community

A Patch of Lawn

A patch of lawn that's trim and neat
As monochromatic as the sea
With here and there perhaps a tree
But nothing's wild, and nothing's free
This is how wild nature looks
With wooden benches over brooks
And paving for your feet

A patch of lawn that's left unmowed
Left abandoned, as a weed
The grass fulfills its inner need
And grows until it comes to seed
Lightly tufted at the top
It seems like it will never stop
And in between, the flowers grow

The essence of the prairie
In a lawn that's left unmowed
If you would change the world
Leave that alone

The Dispossessed

The world is in a hopeless mess
Modern life is full of stress
The world is smaller, and compressed
We like each other less and less
Black and white and east and west
There's poverty and homelessness
Garbage and unhealthiness
And the exile's statelessness
There's cruelty and ruthlessness
Anger and remorselessness
Cold, unfeeling callousness
And each of us is powerless
In our tiny separateness
Our lives hold little interest
Just hollow time and emptiness
No one smiles! We're all depressed
Souls without a fixed address
And some are sexually repressed
Prey on damsels in distress
Think they live above the rest
Lie in court and to the press
We'll never know the truth, I guess
The television has possessed
Our minds-whatever they suggest
We do-and those who would protest
This state of semi-consciousness
Always find, to their distress
That theirs is such a futile quest
they aren't stifled or repressed

but just ignored, what they profess
with logic, passion and with zest
never seems to coalesce
a tempest in the wilderness
lost in infinite regress
those who play the game the best
Own the world, we're just their guests
We drink their Coke, we brush with Crest
To them, we're little more than pests
Consumers of their business
We go to school, we take their tests
And hope that they will be impressed
we stand our ground, we bare our chest
we fill the forms, we take requests
we earn, we spend and we invest
and all of it is meaningless
as one voice mingles with the rest

Konopište #1

The palace sits atop a hill and overlooks a lake
Once a place of power, now it's just for tourists' sake
The collected wealth of centuries is hanging on the walls
In the spacious, stately chambers, down the long and stately
halls
The view from any window portrays a timeless scene
Winter white, or autumn gold, or summer's sumptuous
green
But there's something in this picture, that doesn't seem to fit
Why are the bears in a pit?

The pit is deep, the pit is square
The walls are sheer, the walls are bare
Fit for snakes and bugs and rats
And other slimy things like that
No soft, green grass, no shady trees
No room to roam, no cooling breeze
A crowd of people stands around
The deep depression in the ground
To watch the bears inside the pit
Some rocks, some logs and their own shit
One is lying, in despair
Missing patches of her hair
In a corner, in defeat
There is no further to retreat
The other one is not so proud
Begging bread crumbs from the crowd
Instead of salmon from the stream
For which he fishes in his dreams
I can't accept the scene that I am seeing
I feel ashamed to be a human being

Konopište #2

A garden planted in the bank
the flowers filed into rank
and fertile ground
it's such a pretty pose

A living twist upon the line
accredited to Gertrude Stein
the rows of roses
rose and rose and rose

Changing Leaves

The leaves have changed from green to gold
The forest is on fire
With the final flaming
Of the summer's spent desire
As the Spring precedes the Summer,
We know the Fall will bring
The Winter, for the Autumn
You could say,
Is Winter's Spring

Trip to Mexico

We'll take a trip to Mexico
And live up in the hills
Higher than the butterflies
Among the daffodils

We'll head on down to Yucatan
And see the Pyramids
And bargain for some blankets
With a bunch of snot-nosed kids

We'll take a trip to Mexico
Where the palm trees are so tall
And live our lives in a wooden hut
Down by a waterfall

We'll lie there in a hammock
And habla espanol
We won't ever have to do
A single thing we're told

We'll take a trip to Mexico
And live on apple pie
And every day, look up and say
It's such a lovely sky

We'll wander down a dusty road
And meet an Indian man
Selling toys and T-shirts
That were made in Pakistan

We'll take a trip to Mexico
Dance naked in the breeze
Bathed in ancient moonlight
That is shining through the trees

We'll take a trip to Mexico
Across the Rio Grande
We'll have so much fun we'll stay
Longer than we'd planned

Victims of Terrorism

I was living in the jungle
In a pleasant little town
Til some airplanes dropped some chemicals
And burned the jungle down

I saw a child running
I didn't know her name
But I could see her face
Was twisted up in awful pain

I was living in the desert
With some camels and some sheep
Until the bombs dropped down
And killed my family in their sleep

I never really understood
And no one could explain
Just what we'd done to anger
Those people in the planes

I was living in the mountains
And my life was pretty sad
But why did you have to blow apart
The little that we had?

You all have lovely houses
Stereos and cars
And lots of time to sit around
And watch TV in bars

We've never had the kind of things
That you have never missed
But why does it make you angry
That folks like us exist?

I know you think that we are
Very different from you,
But how could you fail to understand
We're human beings, too

Basic Math

**One plus one
was lots of fun
but you and me
adds up to three
we're going to be
a family
this really means a lot to me**

The Table

Four legs support the table
But it isn't really stable
One leg's just a little shorter
By about a half or quarter
Millimeter, so it wobbles
And we try to solve the problem
With a piece of folded paper
Then it tilts the other way
Perhaps it's an impossibility
Perfect balance and stability
But it's still not clear to me
How this imbalance came to be
And only three legs reach the floor
It didn't wobble in the store

If there is a Heaven...

If there is a heaven, for argument's sake
I picture a green and leafy wood
And in the center there's a lake
The weather's almost always good
Sometimes it rains, and then it's dry
Sometimes there is a gentle breeze
The air conditioning in the sky
That turns the leaves upon the trees
Fruit as sweet as summer wine
Apples, peaches, plums and cherries
Melons growing on the vine
And the bushes ripe with berries

If there is a heaven, it just might be
A place where you could take a walk
By the endless shore of an endless sea
Where waves are breaking on the rocks
Here and there a sandy beach
Where people surf and sail and swim
There's something to appeal to each
And every liquid kind of whim
The water's wet, the sun is warm
The sand is soft between our toes
And malleable to any form
For this is where the castles grow
Heaven just might be a big round ball
Bobbing along in the cosmic night
So massive that you can't see it all
A vision greater than our sight

You can follow any trail
Every path is the path to perfection
There is beauty in each detail
You can reach Nirvana in any direction
And once you've been round that ball
Then you just go around again
'Cause by the time you've seen it all
everything has changed since then

If there is a heaven, it's open all night
No one's going anywhere
With the pulse of the crowd and the neon lights
And the music drifting through the air
From the rows of restaurants and pubs
The sizzling steaks, the frothy brew
The streets are a party, the world is a club
And there is always lots to do
Movies, concerts, games and sports
Jugglers, clowns and acrobats
Swimming pools and tennis courts
And lots of different things like that

If there is a heaven, the food must be great
The flavor saturates your soul
Pleasure served on silver plates
The hot dogs are hot and the ice cream's cold
The people are short, the people are tall
There are so many different kinds

That you can never know them all
And all the women are divine

It seems that whenever I begin
To imagine a heaven whatsoever
It looks a whole lot like the world we're in
No wonder we want it to last forever

Poetic Justice

The sediment
of excrement
upon the public monuments
to soldiers, kings and presidents
contradicts the good intent
and all the effort that was spent
to formalize the sentiment
and honor those whose precedent
achievements and accomplishments
were worthy of acknowledgement

there's no respect
in this world for the dead
the pigeons poop
upon your head

Traffic

The glass-eyed metal monsters
Roam the canyons of the city
With the clashing and the clanging
Of the shifting of their gears

They are always pushing forward
They are one behind the other
They are flowing like a river
Never ending, through the years

Flashing eyes that pierce the darkness
Blind you to their true intentions
But they all have people inside
And they're sucking out their brains

See them waiting for the signal
See them crouching, see them plotting
Like a pack of hungry pit bulls
Who are choking at their chains

Yes! They want to be the tiger!
Who is prowling through the jungle
That's the promise, that's the mantra
Of the humming rubber wheels

We can take you where you're going
We can feed the aching hunger
That you have for domination
We can show you how it feels

You will scatter leaves and pigeons
You will ride in ease and comfort
Over hills and through the desert
You will ride above the earth

All we ask is all your money
Time, devotion and attention
It might cost, we ought to mention
More than it was ever worth

But the acolytes are waiting
With their money, at the ready
They are eager, they are anxious
For a chance to tame the beast

Which waits: it has its own agenda
First, there is a symbiosis
As we try them, as we buy them
So their numbers are increased

From the belly of the dragon
Flowing up the steering column
Through the holy wheel of power
Straight into the driver's hands

There's a force, a kind of power
There's a current, there's a feeling
There's a strange, but strong emotion
That we do not understand

They are moving, all together
They are moving, toward the center
They are queueing, they are crowding
Just like cattle in a chute

Like the cattle, nervous, mooing
Not quite knowing, what they're doing
Are the belching, farting, wheezing
Gross, impatient metal brutes

As I watch them, steaming, baking
In a clot of their creation
Just like people, congregating
And it strikes me, how absurd

Like a herd of giant turtles
Stranded on an asphalt beachhead
Like so many rocks and boulders
Like so many metal turds

But we make them, and we feed them
And we've come to think we need them
And we fail to see them as a
Sign of our impending doom

But the world which they've created
Tangled, twisted, concentrated
Makes it hard to figure out just
Which of us is driving whom

Preposition Poem

There's a chicken on the counter in the kitchen by the sink
You can go ahead and put it in the pot
There's a glass beside the bottle and I'd really like a drink
So go ahead and pour us both a shot

Oh, prepositions tell us where it's at
Your sweaters on the sofa and the sofa's in the flat
And lots of other useful stuff like that
'cause prepositions are really where it's at

The birds are flying over hills and houses, fields and trees
The bugs are crawling underneath the ground
The sun is going down and there's a warm and gentle
breeze
And the green grass is growing all around

Oh, prepositions tell us where things are
The money's in my wallet and the keys are in the car
My brother and his friend are at the bar
And I don't think they're going very far

The skirt that she was wearing had a slit up either side
It was waving like a banner in the breeze
All the young men on the sidewalk turned to stare as she
walked by
You could see a couple feet above her knees

Oh, prepositions tell us where and when
In the garden in the morning, around about half past ten
It's useful information, now and then
So, prepositions tell us where and when

There's a fountain in the middle of a circle in the square
I met my honey there at half past three
She knew just where to find me 'cause I'd called her on the
phone
And that is where I said that I would be

Oh, prepositions tell us where it's at
Your sweaters on the sofa and the sofa's in the flat
And lots of other useful stuff like that
'cause prepositions are really where it's at

The Exhibition

Sunday, and the sky was gray
that factored into our decision
we didn't want to go out to play
and so we chose an exhibition

single file, in a line
we shuffled down those stately halls
thinking we'd improve our minds
by seeing pictures on the walls

As anyone can plainly see
it didn't really work for me

6:55 a.m.

I can sleep for twenty more minutes
Life is good, I'm glad I'm in it
Even though it's a little scary
That it's only temporary

Cog in the Machine

I feel like I'm a cog in something
Turning, turning, turning
Completely insignificant
A part of the machine

There is anger and frustration
That is simmering and burning
As I'm going through the motions
Without knowing what they mean

Like the raindrops form the rivers
That then flow into the ocean
We're a part of something bigger
And it never seems to change

As the planet keeps on turning
As the fire above keeps burning
And the seasons follow seasons
And it shouldn't seem so strange

That the pieces fit together
Like the changes in the weather
And the wave is spreading outward
Like the ripples from a stone

And the karmic implications
Of the spreading undulations
Weave a web of something more
Than what we'd be alone

There is a cosmic synergy
Of matter formed of energy
And life that comes from matter
As a planet from a star

And life turns into consciousness
And then to curiosity
The flow is steady, so
The only question is, "How far?"

What would it be like to be
Somewhere outside reality
And see the singularity
Of overall design

The image that's inherent
From the interplay of actions
In the novel of the universe
The play of the divine

Being there and knowing how it feels
To be a wheel inside a wheel inside a wheel

Breaking Waves

The mighty waves are shattered on the boulders
As if the sea were weeping on their shoulders

Lake Hostivar

In summer, when I go out swimmin'
I'm really there to check out women
Some days my eyes are doubly blessed
I like the topless beaches best

Down In The Sklep

It could be a restaurant, bar or café
Just a big empty room, it's an all purpose space
It's cool and it's dark and it's out of the way
You can step off the treadmill, abandon the race

A steep, jagged stairway of narrow stone steps
Goes down to the sklep

Just a couple of meters under the ground
But, oh, what tales these walls could tell
Of hope that was lost, and treasure found
Of pain and of passion, of heaven and hell

Just a couple of meters, no very great depth
Takes you down to the sklep

In the stone vault, with the vaulted ceiling
Away from the world, we are out of the light
There's an air of subversion, an underground feeling
Here in the night that is out of the night

Down in the chamber where secrets are kept
Down in the sklep

Time can stand still in this kind of a room
Where the grounds fetid moisture is filtered through stones
And the relics of time pile up in the tomb
Dust covered bottles and stacks of old bones
A steep jagged stairway of narrow stone steps
Goes down, down, down to the sklep

Reasons for Writing

Some write for popularity
Some people write for fame
Some write 'cause they're awake at night
And some to point the blame
Some write to take the credit
And some write 'cause they're enraged
Some write to see their lives laid down
In print upon the page
Some people write for money
Some write despite the cost
Some write of sweet nostalgia
For the childhood that they lost
Some people write to tell the world
The horror of their plight
Some write of sweat and passion
On a balmy summer night
Some writers write to please the crowd
Some write to please themselves
Some write to see their name upon
The books upon the shelves
I wonder why I'm writing?
It's really not so clear
Are these the things I want to say?
Or think you want to hear?

Day Off

Once, a long, long time ago on a planet far away
At the moment when the dark of night was turning into day
And the people, quite reluctantly, began to see the light
As it burned right through the blanket of the blackness of the
night

They closed their eyes against it, but they didn't do so well
Like some reluctant turtle who is forced out of his shell
They wanted to crawl back into the world they left behind
The role that they had written in the movie in their mind
The people yawned and shuddered, and stretched them-
selves like cats

And staggered to their bathrooms where they farted, pissed
and shat

While they thought about the dreariness they soon would
have to face

As little known contestants in the so-called human race

Let the day go on without me, let the old world spin
I'll get there when I'm ready, but today I'm sleeping in

Great Big Words

Great big words just sound absurd
When little words will do
You ask me about my emotional state
Instead of “How are you?”

You speak of motivation
'cause you think it's got more class
than simply saying, as you should
get off your lazy ass

You ramble on about substance abuse
When you mean he's high on coke
And you tell me about your cash flow problem
When I know you're plain flat broke

It's not that I don't understand you
I know what you intend
But why say “peer acceptance group?”
When you're talking about my friends

Why do you say “exfoliating”
When you mean I'm going bald
It's not gonna look any better
No matter what it's called

Perhaps you didn't notice
I hope it's not a shock
But you're “scholastically challenged” nephew
Is really dumb as a rock

Perhaps you're trying to obfuscate
Those things that should be clear
You say she's alternatively oriented
I say she's fucking weird

You could say that I'm illiterate
That won't be nothing new
But bigger words just sound absurd
When little words will do

There is Something I Must Do

There is something I must do
I must reach down to tie my shoe
And so I find a step, a wall
Beside the walk, so I won't fall
Or look like I'm a raving nut
And block the sidewalk with my butt
So people have to walk around
While I am staring at the ground
Feeling nervous as they pass
That one of them will kick my ass

Tajemství

Serene, aloof, attractive
Mysterious and exotic
Once the mystery was gone
She was just neurotic

Wishful Thinking

I'd like to think that there's a heaven
That we go to when we die
And take that long blue tunnel
To the light up in the sky
Where the harps are sweetly strumming
The music of the spheres
There are mountains made of chocolate
And the rivers run with beer
I'd like to think we'll all move up
To that permanent condition
It's pleasanter than to think that death
Is followed by decomposition

Physical Evidence

The physical evidence of your public vice
Is on display all winter, yellow ice

Persistence

The image in the placid pool
Does not reflect the stress and strain
That haunt the world of doubt and pain
It's still, serene and cool
The face of someone I should know
He looks an awful lot like me
I think, therefore he cannot be
Looks at me from below

I throw a rock into the sky
Absently into the blue
For lack of other things to do
Its arc was steep and high
Then gravity enforced the law
It plummeted, and with a shock
The lake was shattered by the rock
The image that I saw

Was shattered too, beyond repair
Each drop reflecting in its flight
The metamorphosis of light
Where water meets the air
Gone forever to the sun
Cast upon the passing breeze
That moves the leaves upon the trees
And is forever one

I watched them for a moment, then
Returned my gaze upon the pool
And there the image, clear and cool
Was in one piece again

Portrait of the Artist as Someone Else

I don't know where I got off course
Or where I turned off track
But when I look into the mirror
Somebody else looks back

The Guru Kalehuru

The Guru Kalehuru has an ashram in the woods
Where the birds are sweetly singing, and everything is good
The voice of Kalehuru is carried on the breeze
We can hear it, cool and soothing, in the summer in the trees

Kalehuru's babbling, in the language of the brook
With its flowing mirror image, that says "come take a look
And see the continuity contained within the stream
I am exactly as I seem"

"O Guru Kalehuru, can you show us the way
to permanent enlightenment, starting with today
Love, achievement, wealth and fame, all that we can get?"
And the Guru Kalehuru said "You bet

You must climb the seven steps, but do not climb too fast
Or you could fall and bruise your as-yet-unenlightened ass
If perhaps you stumble, and I truly think you might
just get up and keep on going, it's all right

The way is strange and twisted, beset with falls and traps
But you can ask directions, you're allowed to use a map
Remember where you're going and remember who you are
And if you go real slow, you'll get real far

“Where do we find these seven steps, o Guru great and wise?”

“Almost anywhere you look, underneath the sky
young and old and rich and poor all share the morning sun
all who can perceive me have arrived at level one

Level one , the base, is nothing more than to survive
For you cannot be enlightened, if you are not alive
Don't play games in traffic, don't stay out too long in the
sun
Don't react in anger and don't ever play with guns

“O awesome Kalehuru, that's too easy to be true
that is something even folks as dumb as us can do”
said some members of our party, “Level one is fine,”
and they stepped to the side and out of line

We left them sitting happily, up on a grassy hill
There's every reason to believe that they are up there still
They didn't mourn our parting , they didn't look bereft
They might not have even noticed that we left

We walked across the flatlands, trying hard to miss
The heights of the impossible, the depths of the abyss
We walked, and walked, and walked, and walked until I
had to say
“O, golden Kalehuru, it's been 27 days

I've tried to feel your inner peace, I've listened and I've
watched
But there's a dryness in my throat, a chafing in my crotch
My bones are stiff and out of shape, my feet are awful sore
And frankly Kalehuru, I am just a little bored”

I was trembling as I said it, I was waiting for the wrath
Of the mighty Kalehuru, but Kalehuru laughed
“Level one, as you have seen, was simply to survive
intellectual stimulation doesn’t come till level 5

As for all that other stuff, let’s see what we can do
I think it’s time we took a break, here at level two
With an arm aound our shoulders, Kalehuru gently steered
Us all into a wayside inn which suddenly appeared

There were fountains spraying wine and there were trays of
fruits and nuts
There were great big padded sofas, to ease our tired butts
There were potions, there were lotions, there were creams
and there were gels
To ease our aches and pains and to eliminate the smells

Kalehuru lit a fire, and we reveled in the flames
There was food and drink and laughter, there was music,
there were games
We were so full and happy, contented and at rest
That we almost forgot about our quest

Then the raindrops started pounding, on the old tin roof
And we were mighty glad to find that it was waterproof
Kalehuru’s finger traced a trickle down the pane
“Level Two is comfort, and shelter from the rain”

“But, O Perfect Kalehuru, I really must object
that is quite contrariwise to every other sect
material possessions can lead to worldly stress
and the Guru Kalehuru said, “I guess...

I respect the strength and power of the gurus with the soles
Which have become so hard that they can tread the blazing
coals

Or live high up in the mountains wearing nothing but a rag
On the other hand, that must be such a drag

They may sleep on cold, flat rocks and live on beans and rice
They survive, but honestly, it can't be very nice
This isn't some aesthetic cult, forget the self-denial"
Kalehuru said, "That's not my style"

We stayed there for a week or two, or maybe it was four
And I said, "Surely, Kalehuru, there must be something
more

Level two just seems to be a sweet, unchanging groove
And the Guru said, "You're right, it's time to move"

But I'm glad that we have come this far, I think perhaps it's
time

To provide you with some pointers that will help you on the
climb

If you try to rush ahead, that could cause you to slip
Try to pay attention, and not to lose your grip

You cannot reach a higher stage, 'til the one before is done
If you're rejecting level two, you're back to level one
This is a prerequisite, a base camp, don't you see
If you want to get to level three"

There were some among our party, who said “that might be true
But quite frankly we’re contented to remain at level two
We like the comfy couches and we like our MTV”
And Kalehuru said “All right by me”

The rest of us, and Kalehuru, chose to seize the day
And before we knew it, we were headed on our way
The land was green and wooded now, the path it gently rose
We saw fewer people, and wearing fewer clothes

We said “Guru Kalehuru, we would seek and we would find
But aren’t you rather worried about those we left behind?”
Kalehuru’s voice was soft, mellifluous and steady
“They will come whenever they are ready

Enjoy the lovely summer day, enjoy the lovely view
When it comes to other people, there is nothing you can do
When you get to level three, you won’t raise such a fuss
After all, that means there’s more for us”

“But what IS level three, O Kalehuru, wise and true
We’re prepared to do most anything you tell us to”
Kalehuru stopped right there, and sat beneath a tree
As we followed suit, the Guru K. began to speak

Level three’s the easiest and the hardest of the bunch
It can cost you lots of money, it can make you late for lunch
It can turn your insides inside out, and make you moan and drool
Until you lose all self-respect and act just like a fool

The moon must have the sun, the yin the yang, concave
convex

The teka needs the sheka...level three is sex
It's the hallmark of our species, it's a calling, it's a need
The sower meets the grower for the planting of the seed

We camped that night, and there were mighty movements
in the stars

The constellations quivered, as Venus met with Mars
The moon was watching from the pool, a golden ball of light
Lying tranquil in the water in the middle of the night

In the morning while we sat and had our breakfast by the
lake

(It was fairly early still, and most were not awake)
One member of our party said, "O Kalehuru, please,
Level three was wonderful, but I am ill at ease

Was that love, or merely the fulfillment of desire"
Kalehuru idly poked the embers of the fire
"Emotion is a motion and it needs a driving force
let's not put the cart before the horse

Enjoy the pleasures of the flesh, they're meant to be enjoyed
And they can be the tool of love, properly employed
But if you're body can't fulfill, your heart's and souls desire
You'll find all the love you want, at level four and higher"

We left some very happy campers lying on the ground
And followed Kalehuru, who didn't make a sound
Up a steep and narrow staircase, paved with metaphor
Off on the road to level four

As we climbed the staircase, which it seemed would never end

Every time we reached a landing, it was just another bend
The noble Kalehuru, explained a little more
Just what lay in wait for us, up on level four

“Some folks say that level four’s the same as level three
and if they feel that strongly, who am I to disagree?
They may find fulfillment in their husband or their wife
But as for me, I’m seeking more from life

Four’s the friends and family and the people that you meet
As you’re riding on the bus, or walking down the street
It’s your colleagues, it’s your classmates, it’s your teacher,
it’s your boss
It’s the people who you can’t avoid, your destinies will cross

The key to level four’s to keep a smile on your face
And even if you want to change, you still should know your
place”

“Wise old Kalehuru,” I said, “How can that be?
That sounds like subservience to me”

Kalehuru picked an apple that was hanging from the tree
Polished it a little and then handed it to me
“Even if you know that they are wrong and you are right
what’s it gonna’ hurt to be polite?”

Try a bit to see the other persons point of view
And try to leave a space when you are standing on a queue
Say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ often, for often have I seen it
They can work like magic.... when you mean it”

“Forgive me Kalehuru, my understanding’s muddy
is the secret to enlightenment just loving everybody?”
Kalehuru laughed and shrugged and looked up at the sky
And said “Well, it doesn’t hurt to try”

We carried on, a few of us, but quite a few had stayed
At level four, just chillin’ with the friends that they had
made
We were feeling pumped, excited, glad to be alive
We were over halfway there, and keen for level five

It seemed to me my senses were unnaturally aware
But the Guru Kalehuru said “That’s just the mountain air
If you think you’ve found enlightenment in some endorphin
rush
Then your body may be healthy but your brain has turned
to mush

Five’s a bit more difficult than those which have preceded
Effort and intelligence are needed
As a child becomes a parent, as a seed becomes a tree
Five means being all that you can be

Mentally and physically, they’re strongly interlinked
The healthier the body, the clearer you can think
The search for self-improvement is a never ending quest
To seek the limits of your mind and put them to the test”

“Excuse me, Kalehuru, but that wasn’t really clear
is this some Taoist bullshit where the object disappears
and the only thing that matters is just being on the road
and Kalehuru said “Well, yes and no

First of all," the Guru said, and looked a bit annoyed
I believe that 'Taoist bullshit' is a phrase we should avoid
"The pathways to enlightenment are many and diverse
I believe that mine is better, but I don't know theirs are
worse

Level five is self-improvement, lift some weights or read
some books

Do some step aerobics, take up jogging, learn to cook
Follow any path you choose and you may learn the trick
That will bring you up to level six"

"O outstanding Kalehuru, what is left for level six
it seems all the important stuff's already in the mix
Material possessions, love, knowledge and success
What comes after that, I just can't guess

The big K nodded thoughtfully, and rolled a big fat joint
"It's good that you have got this far, but you still don't see
the point
Your lack of understanding is something of a joke
I see we need to climb some more," and handed me a toke

Suddenly I saw it, and it didn't seem so odd
"O your stonedness, Kalehuru, is the Ganja really God?"
The Guru Kalehuru, in a voice beyond mere cool
Turned to me and said, "Don't be a fool"

Although it will not hurt you none, to smoke a joint a day
It won't bring you enlightenment, for that is not the way
The reefer's only reefer, there's no call to be obsessed
For that is not enlightenment, but just lightheadedness

There are many things we have, from back at
level two
That ease the mind and body, 'cause that's just
what they do
But just because it's good for relaxation
Doesn't mean that it's part of the equation"

There were fewer of us now, and as we walked
along
We felt the sunshine on our skin, and filled the
air with song
We could feel the winds of change, the magic
in the air
The higher we got, the less we felt, our worries
and our cares

I mentioned this to Guru K, who simply said,
"I know
Baggage only slows you down, and makes you
feel real low
The future is before us, and it's coming up real
fast
You can never, ever, ever change the past"

"Is that the answer then," I asked, "to leave the
past behind
I can tell you, there are moments when I really
wouldn't mind
To start from scratch, begin again, is that the
way to go?"
Kalehuru said "Good guess, but no

I would have thought by now that you would
be a bit more hip
You should have learned on level three, it's not
a solo trip
Or perhaps at level 5, from the books up on the
shelf
The key to level six is, it can't be about yourself

There might be a partner, or a child in that role
Or a job, or just your hobby, but you have to
have a goal
If your climbing just to climb then you are
headed for a fall
You have to have a purpose, after all"

"O righteous Kalehuru," I said, "I understand
and I can see things working out exactly as
you planned
I'm ready for the seventh step, I'm here to win
the prize
O spectacular Kalehuru, good and wise!"

Some folks stayed at level six, and some got up
to go
Wondering what the mighty Kalehuru had to
show
It was late in the afternoon, a blue sky over-
head
As we walked, the Guru Kalehuru calmly said

“Once you have accomplished levels one and
two and three
you can get along just fine, you have no need
of me
if you’ve accomplished one through six, and
done them through and through
it might seem like seven leaves you nothing
else to do

It’s all of them rolled into one, the taking and
the giving
Seven, you could say, is all about the art of
living
That doesn’t mean there is no goal, there’s just
no turning back
Level seven simply means enjoy, accept, relax”

We walked down a garden path, beside a
babbling brook
’Til we crossed the River Aleph, where we
stopped and had a look
At the gardens bright with sinuous rills, the
incense bearing trees
Which sent their scent across the water, on the
evening breeze

“O timeless Kalehuru, there is power in this
place
There is beauty, there is music, there is el-
egance and grace
Although the trail was difficult, I’m very glad I
hiked it
And Kalehuru said, “I’m glad you liked it”

