

The Alchemist's Notebook



Willie Watson

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also by Willie Watson:
Four Syllables on Water
The Guru Kalehuru and other Poems
Poems From Prague
The Laughing Giraffe

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Introduction

The Alchemy series of poetry readings has been going on in Prague for about 2 years now. The format works fairly well; a featured performer followed by a break and then the Open Mike* section. That's where I come in.

I'm not sure if I'm what you'd call a real poet, or just a guy who likes being on stage and having everybody pay attention to him, but the end result is the same. After two years of attending these events I have, once again, collected enough poems to fill up a respectable number of pages between two covers and call it a book.

A lot of the poems I wrote during this period were political. For the most part, I've left them out of this book. One reason is that they weren't very good. When I wrote "The 26 Reasons Why I Hate George Bush," (A is for his arrogance, and so on) I was a little bit afraid that I'd run into difficulties with the rarer letters, but that wasn't the problem at all. I just kept finding more and more reasons, and the poem wound up being a lot longer than it was funny. Besides, it wasn't exactly timeless in its message. No one today reads Thoreau's unpublished masterpiece "Screw You, James K. Polk, And The Horse You Rode In On."

But also, I don't like what those poems did to me. It's been a rough four years for us liberals, and it doesn't look like it's going to get better any time soon. I've become bitter and angry and that's not a good thing to be. I'm basically, usually, an optimistic and cheerful kind of guy. So, I hope the poems in this book are (for the most part) upbeat and enjoyable.

I'm not totally trying to deny reality, I'm not hiding my head in the sand. And I'm not throwing the poems away, either. It's just that that's not what this book is about.

The first section consists of 21 sonnets. When I'm stuck for an idea, this is the form I turn to. It's much easier to create a 10 syllable phrase in iambic pentameter than it is to write a whole poem. All you need to do is start running the syllable combinations through your head, and pretty soon you've got something that sounds like it makes sense, and then you just start rhyming with that. The rest of the poem usually more or less takes care of itself.

The second section is the Saga of Sam, a series of poems I've written about our son Sam, from his birth a little over two years ago to the present. I hope to be adding more to this in future collections.

The third selection is all the miscellaneous stuff, because there has to be a section for the miscellaneous stuff. One never knows what the catalyst will be.

The fourth section is an eight piece poem entitled "Poetry is Magic," and that about sums it up for me. I believe it is.

*I'm not going to spell it "open mic". I don't give a shit what anybody says.

Acknowledgements

I draw inspiration from many sources and, as I'm reading other writers' work or sitting at Open Mike poetry readings, the thought I often have in mind is: How can I use this? So, that explains the titles of Lucien's Poem, Rinat's Poem, and Laurie's Poem.

I downloaded the cover illustration from a really cool website called www.bluehoney.org.

I also must thank my wife, Helena, for listening to all of my poems and saying she likes them, even when they're horrible, and for putting this book together.

Sonnets

A Single Grain Of Sand

A single grain of sand has little weight
The most that it can do is irritate
Somewhere inside your shorts that's hard to reach
But lots of them make up a lovely beach

Snow requires more than just one flake
A single word does not a novel make
A single thread does not create a net
A solitary voice a choir, but yet

The quality of each and every one
Affects the whole, when all is said and done
A single rotten plank can ruin a boat
And make it quite impossible to float

You cannot have a money making store
whose shelves are stocked with useless rubbish, or
A healthy forest made of sickly trees
People are a lot like that, if we

were all just slightly better than we are
The world would be a better place by far

Binary Lives

While walking past the panelaks at night
I notice that a few of them are dark
While some of them emit a brilliant light
The contrast in the images is stark

Some on, some off, that's all they ever show
Of the lives that people live inside
People I may never get to know
Some in, some out, and thus we are divided

Some are happy, some, no doubt, are sad
Some are sitting down to eat their dinner
Some are talking, some are getting mad
Some are losers, some of them are winners

Each screen tuned in to a different station
We all live our lives in isolation

Democracy

Democracy is such a lovely word
It means “The People Rule,” in ancient Greek
A lovely thought, a worthy goal to seek
And to all other systems it’s preferred

But “people” covers quite a lot of ground
The good, the bad, the ugly and the sick
Some ignorant, and some are just plain thick
I think that covers most of us around

The issues are complex, but we are not
And fail to really think the issues through
(The way the rulers really ought to do)
When a clever slogan fills the spot

As long as we, so easily, are fooled
We, the people, always will be ruled

Danger In The Grass

I've noticed there are not so many signs
In Prague's fair parks, through which I often pass
Warning of imprisonment or fines
If you should dare to step upon the grass

The grass is dark and thick, and getting long
But tourists learn, and locals are aware
That there are dangers lurking in the lawn
Placed like little land mines here and there

They're shaped a little like a fat cigar
The texture's like a squirmy sort of glue
Tread on the grass, you won't get very far
Before one finds the bottom of your shoe

Although the lawn looks sweet, and green, and nice
Stray from the path, and you will pay the price

Empty Nests

In summer when the leaves are thick and green
The forest is a dark and hidden place
And from outside the inside can't be seen
So dense that you can hardly find a trace

Of order, form, the structure of the plot
It doesn't want to give a thing away
The velvet curtain can conceal a lot
But somewhere near the climax of the play

The leaves fall to the ground, the curtains part
And so reveal the sights which were forbidden
The woven works of ancient avian art
The nests which once were quite demurely hidden

A shallow bowl, a small inverted dome
That is the birds abandoned summer home

Fading Conversations

At parties, or the clubs where we all go
the sacred places of the social scene
we talk with people who we barely know
and don't always say exactly what we mean

When someone says "How are you?" we say "Great"
"O.K.", "Not bad", "I really can't complain"
we do not pause, no need to hesitate
we're always ready with some old cliché

But then there comes a moment when it's still
We sip our drinks, as if our throats are dry
Conversation takes a bit of skill
And no one wants to be there when it dies

We make a lame excuse and walk away
When we can't think of anything to say

5 A. M.

I like to go out walking round the town
When everybody else is still in bed
Without the constant stream of city sounds
I can hear the thoughts inside my head

Without the hum of busses, trains and cars
The constant hum of drills attacking walls
The conversations spilling from the bars
Without the phones, their different tones, their calls

The city seems so calm, and so composed
A scene that's as serene as it can be
Without the interference that's imposed
You can hear the birds up in the tree

The city would be wonderful, no doubt
If only all the people were kicked out

Phantom Map

I wonder, if there were some sort of map
That led to a Utopia, somewhere
A perfect place, that's free of all the crap
That is the current state of world affairs

I wonder, if there were a microscope
So powerful that we could plainly see
A gleam of promise, or a ray of hope
That someday everybody would be free

I wonder, if there were a looking glass
So honest, it could see inside our minds
Below the surface; gender, race or class
I wonder if we'd like the things we'd find

If the answers were all written in a book,
Would we believe, or would we even look?

Poem Without Clichés

I'd like to write a poem without cliches
No stars that shine like pinpricks in the sky
No brooks that babble as they're rushing by
No children playing on hot summer days

To represent the innocence we've lost
For words, like bees, once used, have lost their sting
And used again, no longer mean a thing
They're like a bridge that we've already crossed

No rain that falls on lonely streets at night
As metaphor for life's unending pain
The weather's insufficient to explain
The depth of our emotions, and our plight

No hell below, no heaven up above
No birds that fly upon a gentle breeze
That whispers as it ruffles through the trees
No soaring hearts with wings to speak of love

I'd like to write a poem without that shit
Alas, I must confess, this wasn't it

The Moving Gallery

Looking out the window of the train
A moving window on a placid scene
There are things out there I can't explain
There are things I don't know what they mean

I see a tractor drive across the ground
I don't know what his plan is for that day
From where I sit, I cannot hear a sound
It's just a picture in a silent play

I see a castle standing on a hill
Once, it had great power in its grasp
But we move on, and it is standing still
Once again, receding in the past

I see a princess on the tower's top
Looking at the peasants down below
Walking through the fields and tending crops
One sunny day, one spring of long ago

The mind can drift; it will, in time, come back
It's just the train, that must stay on the track

Lucien's Poem

Everything that's wood was once a tree
I read those words and felt that they were fine
There is a string of continuity
Contained within the wood, and in those lines

The windowpane was once a pile of sand
The steel was just another bit of stone
Everything has come up from the land
The homes we live in, everything we own

But somewhere, there's a line that we have crossed
We've stripped the earth, and nearly left it bare
In memory of the paradise we've lost
We have the table, and we have the chair

So, when you feel that things have gone off track
Touch something, and just let it all come back

Mid-life Crisis

I know that I should be a happy man
My health is good, I get three meals a day
I watch the news, but that's all far away
We're living in a green and pleasant land

I have a decent flat, a lovely wife
A son who, most folks say, looks just like me
And so, I can't explain why it should be
I feel there's something missing in my life

Could it be down a path I didn't take
Or something that's behind some secret door
Something different, or just something more
It's just a nagging feeling I can't shake

Living well, of course, is well and good
But in the end, what is it all about
I'm not a true believer, I have doubts
Am I doing everything I should?

As life goes on, and time is slipping by
I do the things I do, but don't know why

Parallel Tracks

The train is running on parallel tracks
It rolls across the earth and then it's gone
As far as the horizon and beyond
Na paralelních kolejích jede vlak

The mighty dragon crawls along the ground
A couple hundred tons of rolling steel
The clicking of a thousand tiny wheels
Racing forward, as they spin around

Riding in the belly of the beast
Like Jonah, in the belly of the whale
Each passenger can tell a different tale
And thus, the dragon's power is increased

I watch the trains as they go rumbling by
And wonder at the tales they have to tell
As countless other poets have, as well
Across the years, across the clear night sky

There are two trains that run on parallel lines
One on the ground, and one that's in my mind

Points On A Line

When I was young, I couldn't quite conceive
Of being quite as old as I am now
Actually, it's still hard to believe
Aging really shouldn't be allowed

I looked at those much bigger than me then
As creatures from another universe
I really didn't want to be like them
Slow and grumpy, that would be the worst

Life is a parade in time and space
And no one gets to pass the same point twice
Proceeding at a slow and steady pace
Sometimes it's hard, but usually it's nice

We stand at different points along the line
From where I'm standing now, it looks just fine

Geometry

In winter, when the trees are shorn and bare
And all the leaves have fallen to the floor
We see what's there behind what isn't there
It was, but now it isn't any more

The skeletons of trees now stand exposed
The patterns of their branches are revealed
Against the heartless sky is juxtaposed
Their naked beauty, and their stark appeal

Their structure, from the branches to the twigs
A monument to fractal symmetry
The smaller forms that duplicate the big
The way things are, the way they'll always be

The view is clear, the air is cold and fresh
Winter shows us nature in the flesh

Soliloquy

The very blankness of the empty page
Is begging for some words to fill it up
As the water's destined for the cup
And so I sit and type some words of rage

Bitter words, of anger unexpressed
Words of pain, and sorrow for the dead
We sit and write our hollow words instead
Of doing what we know would bring us rest

The answer to the question Hamlet posed
To be, or not to be, is clear enough
Even when things get a little rough
I'd never want to bring it to a close

Though life is sometimes hard, it's understood
Compared to the alternative, its good

Reciprocation

Sometimes it seems a parents job is one
Of stopping kids from having too much fun
We will not let them climb up on the shelves
Perhaps because we can't do that ourselves

We will not let them touch a lot of stuff
It makes a child's life extremely rough
No knives, no scissors, none of life's great joys
We try to make them play with boring toys

But, sometimes it also works the other way
There are things that we can't do or say
Children copy everything they see
And that is not how we want them to be

So, everything is working out just fine
Because the children keep adults in line

The Cynic

One morning, barely half awake, I heard
The sound of music, coming from the trees
Gently borne upon the summer breeze
But all that I could think was “stupid birds”

That evening I was walking through the park
And saw the sunset, brilliant, in the west
Its work was done, and it deserved the rest
But all that came to mind was “now it’s dark”

So young and beautiful, well-dressed and rich
My fleeting glance turned to a longing gaze
I tried to think of proper words of praise
But the rhyme that came to mind was “fucking bitch”

I try to write with dignity and class
To clearly use the words as they were meant
At least, without satirical intent
But then a rhyme just bites me in the ass

It’s not the story that I meant to tell
But cynicism rhymes so very well

Rinat's Poem

The moon above is hard and bitter cold
Its shining face is just reflected light
But there it is, a beacon in the night
Dispelling deepest dark with brilliant gold

A plant can be a flower or a weed
A sign of our affection, or a waste
But which is which depends upon our taste
Their meaning is according to our need

The heart is just a bloody pump, it's clear
The seat of our emotions is the mind
The poets lie, but still, somehow, I find
My heart beats faster every time you're near

Science can explain a lot of stuff
Artificial hearts can beat as well
And chemicals replace the flowers smell
But explanations somehow aren't enough

When we want to write a poem of love
It's hearts and flowers, and the moon above

Dandelions

When dandelions bloom throughout the land
Like golden jewels scattered on the lawn
We know that summer days are close at hand
Spring is here, and winter is long gone

But as I wander down these city streets
Concrete canyons flanked by walls of gray
There is no soft, green grass beneath my feet
The day looks much like any other day

But even though we've blanketed the earth
With concrete, plastic, glass and all the rest
Spring is joy, and light, and love, and birth
Spring springs back, spring cannot be suppressed

The tables that pour out of the café's
And sprout like flowers on each city street
To take advantage of the sunny days
Are omens no less certain, nor less sweet

Where dandelions are a rarer thing
There are other, urban signs of spring

The Choice

When Dickens wrote “It was the best of times”,
He wrote “It was the worst of times” as well
And there’s eternal truth within those lines
Life is heaven, but we make it hell

Things are getting better every day
Technology’s advancing at a pace
That, in the game of life that we all play
the rules are changing for the human race

Things are getting better, but the curse
That’s been with us since history began
Is that they’re simultaneously worse
And that’s the part that I don’t understand

If we all want the future to be good
And smarten up a bit, I think it could

Saga of Sam



Sam At Two Weeks

The first expression of our species
Making faces while making feces

Sam at Five Months

Our son just turned five months the other day
He isn't quite so helpless as before
And he can scoot real well across the floor
As long as there is nothing in his way

He struggles, and he turns from side to side
He gets off balance, or gets turned around
He bumps his little head upon the ground
He hasn't learned to take things in his stride

He doesn't have a stride to take things in
And so he cries, frustrated with the chore
But tries again, and does a little more
And soon, at least at this, I'm sure he'll win

What kind of man he'll be, we still can't tell
But for now, he's doing pretty well

The Continuing Saga of Sam

Once there was a little boy
Who started as a single cell
Planted in his mommy's womb
And planted very well
But that's a tale
That I don't need to tell
I'm sure some day you'll find out for yourself

On the night that you were born
There was a light and gentle snow
But you were in the hospital
And so you wouldn't know
But that, young man,
Is how the story goes
I only wrote it down 'cause it was so

At the time that you were born
You were so very, very small
That it was difficult to see
How such a tiny doll
Would ever grow
To anything at all
(not that your Daddy's really all that tall)

Now you're almost six months old
And creepy-crawling all around
And every day that passes by
You're covering more ground
And making lots
Of silly little sounds
And sometimes what you eat does not stay down

The story isn't ended yet
There will be much more to say
In the story of your life
Unfolding day to day
And everything
You do along the way
But that's all there is for now, O.K?

Sam At Nine Months

He reaches left, he reaches right
He grabs at everything in sight
He reaches north, he reaches south
And everything goes in his mouth

Sam At Ten And A Half Months

He's such a little angel when he sleeps
But he's a devil when he is awake
With his screaming and his crying
There is little point denying
He's a demon out of hell,
For heaven's sake

Sam at 11 Months

Now it's just a step or two
But pretty soon you know what you'll do?
You'll walk through the kitchen
Across the floor
You'll walk through the living room
And out the door
You'll walk down the stairs
And across the lawn
Around the corner
And you'll be gone
You'll walk to school
That'll be O.K.
Then you'll walk home
At the end of the day
You'll walk down the street
You'll walk with friends
You'll walk down roads
That have no end
Sometimes you'll be walking
and going somewhere
sometimes you'll be walking
and you won't care
you'll walk in the daylight
you'll walk in the dark
you'll walk down the beach
and you'll walk in the park
you'll walk to the restaurant
walk to the store
you'll walk for miles
then you'll walk some more
you'll walk tall,

and you'll walk far
you could be the first person
to walk on Mars
you'll walk in the rain
you'll walk in the sun
you'll walk in the forest
and sometimes you'll run
some day you'll walk home
with a beautiful girl
and you'll walk together
all over the world
and maybe, someday
someday, maybe
you'll be walking
with a brand new baby

Sam At Fifteen Months

We buy the baby lots of toys
But the things that he enjoys
The best, alas, are not his own
He wants to play with our mobile phones

Sam At Eighteen Months

I like it when he's sitting near
And pulls my hair and twists my ear
And so, there is some wounded pride
When he goes to the other side
And yet, I get a little rest
Because he likes his mother best

Miscellaneous

The Alchemist's Notebook

I had a little notebook
and every page was blank
so I wrote a little poem
but, I must admit, it stank

Irrelevance

How can I describe, in words
The sights I've seen, the sounds I've heard
The clicking wheels that move the train
The hum of tires in the rain
The clouds up in the sky, the birds...
Don't give a damn about my words

Prisms

The rain is cold, the rain is wet
the rain is miserable, and yet
It looks so lovely when it stops
And light is shining on the drops

A Passing Glance

Yesterday, while standing still
I saw a man up on a hill
And then a thought occurred to me
I wondered who that man could see
And who, in turn, those people who
He saw had in their field of view
And does it go the whole world round?
This passing glance, without a sound

Bus Rider

I like riding on the bus
I can look out the window as the world goes by
Let my mind go blank, and rest my feet
That is, if I can get a seat

Anonymous Love Poem

I know where the sun goes when it goes away at night
And drops behind the western hills and disappears from
sight
It has been, and it is now, and always will be true
I wish that I could be as sure of you

I see you every now and then, and everything's O.K.
It's a pleasure, it's a treat, it is the highlight of my day
But when you're gone I wonder where you go and what you
do
But, honestly, I haven't got a clue

Does your voice still sound as sweet when I'm not there to
hear?
Does the light behind your eyes still shine as crystal clear?
All I really know of you is what you seem to be,
But who are you when you are not with me?

The Balcony

I'm glad I have a balcony
Because I like the view
It's better than the TV set
Because I know it's true

I don't see the explosions
Sending flames up in the sky
But now and then I see
A supermodel passing by

Butterflies

Butterflies, oh butterflies
Whatever do they symbolize
Summer, whimsy, color, light
Ephemerality and flight
And, of course, it's understood
Beauty..... and I think that's good

Autumn Changes

It's just a perfect autumn day
The air is cool, it's not too cold
Life is good, I feel O.K.
And things are newer than they're old

The leaves above are now below
A golden carpet on the floor
The gaps between the branches show
A view I hadn't seen before

Of long horizons, far away
And buildings that I hadn't seen
Which were, on brighter summer days
Hidden by a wall of green

The surplus apples on the ground
Could be fermented in the pot
The tiny wasps all hover round
The sweet, delicious smell of rot

The evening shadows spread their limbs
To reach the horizontal heights
The light is brighter than it's dim
As the day approaches night

A time of death and of decay
That's how it's always been arranged
But it's all right, it's all O.K.
That autumn brings the winds of change

It's not a time to be forlorn
Cycles are the way of things
One man dies, another's born
The fall's the reason for the spring

Like a snake that sheds it's skin
And, thus renewed, it crawls away
Once again, we can begin
Each morning brings another day

The world keeps spinning round, it ought
To not be spinning quite so fast
But I take comfort in this thought:
The future's longer than the past

Human Nature

Human nature is two-sided
We're conflicted, we're divided
There's a side of us that has a
Morbid thirst for blood and gore
So it is that human history
Tells a tale of constant war
Even though it's still a mystery
What on Earth we're fighting for

Ever since the days when we were
Savage, ape-like, speechless creatures
We have known the art of killing
First, it was with sticks and stones
Sharpened rocks with jagged edges
Smashing skulls and breaking bones
Each one would attack the other
Each one would defend his own

In each blood-crazed, warring nation
Each succeeding generation
There've been some who understood that
Fighting wars was quite insane
But intelligence and reason,
Clearer thought, and logic plain
Often was accused of treason
By the potentates of pain

Now we're more sophisticated
There are weapons we've created
That can kill from far away a
Lot of people at one time
People who we do not know
The rush of power is sublime
We justify it, call it war
In denial of our crime

Now we have a choice before us
Carry on with bloody war as
If we didn't understand the
Consequences of our deeds
In the never ending cycle
Of cruelty, hate and greed
Or to realize that our
Survival is not guaranteed

Now, the flames are all consuming
There's no space now, there's no room for
War as we have always known it
If we really want to last
We must build a world of peace
Or end it all in one big blast
PEOPLE! HEED THE VOICE OF REASON!
There's no future in the past

We could have a world that's caring
Based on loving, based on sharing
Based on truth and harmony, I
Really, truly think we can
Live together on the planet,
As a family of man

Seen On The Number Nine Tram

I know this poem might not be politically correct
But does that woman have a mustache or is that a man with
breasts?

We aren't getting any clues from how he/she is dressed

The trousers and the sweater are both rather unisex

And the way that his/her hair is cut is neutral at best

My curiosity is piqued, I cannot let it rest

But, the more I stare at him or her, the less that I can guess

There are no clues, this way or that, which even would
suggest

Much less an easy way that we can put it to the test

But, since there is no question of his/her attractiveness

I guess that I'll forget about it, that would be the best

The Debilitating Effect Of Marijuana On The Mind

I meant to write, to make a point
But I sat down to smoke a joint
I found the rhymes just wouldn't come
Surprisingly, I was struck dumb
And then a voice, inside my head
Softly, but quite clearly said
You'll never write, you understand
Unless you have a pen in hand

Stand To The Right!

When I'm in a hurry
'cause I'm running rather late
The one thing I don't want to do
Is stand around and wait

So I hit the escalator
And I'm running up the stairs
But then my stride is broken
By somebody standing there

“S dovolení”, I say, that is
“could you please let me by”
and they look at me real nasty like
and, slowly, step aside

As if my rude impatience
Has offended them, somehow
I just smile and keep on going
But I think – you bloody cow

You worthless, idle, obstinate
Lump of inert clay
Do you think you have the right
To be in everybody's way?

Stand to the right! Move over!
Let the other people pass
Do you think we want to stand back here
And watch your big fat ass

As the escalator slowly inches
Towards the light of day
Which, suddenly, has come to seem
A long, long, way away

You worse than senseless creature!
You block! You stone! You brick!
Your presence on the planet
Is enough to make me sick

Some of us have places
We must go and dates to keep
Stand to the right! Move over!
You constipated creep

You semi-sentient being
You are rooted like a tree
If the stairs themselves weren't moving
You'd have no mobility

You're dumber than a sausage
You are no use at all
Although you do a pretty fair
Impression of a wall

In the noble social experiment
That is called the human race
Your only contribution
Is the taking up of space

You're an impediment to progress
You're a spanner in the works
Stand to the right! Move over!
You inconsiderate jerk!

Of those of you who read this,
I know that some of you
Are of the opposing camp,
The other point of view

So you might think my sphincter's
wound up just a bit too tight
You might think it and, I guess
It's possible you're right

So, I hope this poem contains no lines
Of personal offense
But how can you be so oblivious
So insensitive, so dense

Stand to the right! Move over!
Are you deaf as well as blind?
We shouldn't need to tell you
It shouldn't take a sign

Stand to the right! Move over!
It's not that hard to do
You'll find it really easy
After just a time or two

Just stand to the right! Move over!
You could get habituated
Stand to the right! Move over!
It would be appreciated

If I Had My Druthers

If I had my druthers, I'd ruther be rich
'cause not havin' no money's a son of a bitch
You can't spend your evenings in fancy cafes
When you're working long hours for miserable pay

If I had my druther's, I'd ruther be young
'cause experience ain't worth a pile of dung
and all the mistakes that I made way back when
I'd just like to make 'em all over again

If I had my druthers, than I'd ruther be
Young, rich and good-looking, and single and free
If I had my druthers, I know what I'd do
I'd sail off to some South Sea Island with you

Voices

If one hears voices in the air
Of people who aren't really there
Is that a sign of inspiration?
Or excess imagination?
Are they to be admired or pitied?
Joan of Arc, or Walter Mitty?
Are they prophets, poets, seers,
Or just plain blank between the ears?

Sexuality

If you want to be straight, be straight
If you want to be gay, be gay
If you want to be something in between
Dance with a dwarf on the trampoline
Play hide-the-ferret down your jeans
Subscribe to alternative magazines
Get some surgical gloves and vaseline
Nudge, nudge, wink, wink, do you know what I mean?
Dress up like a girl on Hallowe'en
I guess that's still O.K.

Let's Make a Deal

I want to be rich and I want to be famous
Respected, successful and popular, too
So, do me a favor, remember my name as
I'm sure that you want it the same as I do
And if I get rich and successful and famous
I'll build a big palace where you can all stay
And we can all be rich and famous together
And party all night and through half the next day

Laurie's Poem

Standing on the corner as the cars go whizzing past
Wondering if I'll ever reach the other side at last
The waiting is frustrating and we shuffle as we stand
Waiting for the little green man

No Such Thing

There's no such thing as leprechauns, fairies, elves or trolls
There is no jolly fat man living at the northern pole
There are no ghosts or zombies in the graveyard late at night
No dragons, ogres, witches, wizards, watermen or sprites
There are no werewolves in the woods, no mermaids in the
sea
On these points, I think you'll find, most modern folks agree
We don't believe in fairy tales, so why should it seem odd
To say there are no angels, devils, heaven, hell or God?

More Musings On Atheism

The planet that we're living on is beautiful and strange
And we are very fortunate, it has been so arranged
Whether it's coincidence, or whether it was planned
Does not concern me all that much, I hope you understand

Yes or no, the rivers flow, the world keeps spinning round
The trees turn green in springtime, and the sun goes up and
down
I do not have the slightest clue, how it all came to be
Whether there's a God or not, I know that it's not me

On Alter Earth

On alter earth
The air is clean
The water's blue
The grass is green
And people live a long, long time
There is no war
There is no crime
At all on alter earth

On alter earth
The children go
To school, but they
Already know
They're living in a world that cares
A world where
Everybody shares
The fruits of alter earth

On alter earth
There is no stress
We all have more
From using less
The fruit is growing on the trees
It is a life
Of endless ease
For all, in alter earth

On alter earth
No one is poor
We have no need
For that no more
The land and sea produce the stuff
For all to always
Have enough
And more on alter earth

On alter earth
The morning sun
Is like a sign
To everyone
The orange flush, the brilliant glow
Is saying go,
Man, go, man, go
Today on alter earth

On alter earth
The traffic flows
And no ones stepping
On your toes
And no one's ever, ever mean
And sex is sacred, not obscene
It's great on alter earth

It's really not that different
From what we have, indeed
I'm sure we'll get there, once we make a start
The world could be a paradise
And all we really need
Is a bit of brains and a minor change of heart

Little Red Riding Hood

Did Little Red Riding Hood have a horse?
He isn't mentioned in the tale
It may not matter much, of course
But is there something they are hiding?
What in the world was Little Red riding?

Status

It is no crime
To try and fail
We can't all be
The alpha male

Fitness

If working out is good for you
Could someone please explain
Why the exercise we do
Should leave us in such pain?

Šafařkova

I went back to a neighborhood, where I had lived before
Just a couple years ago, perhaps a little more
The building on the corner, which had been a burned out
shell
Was all fixed up and looking good...as a luxury hotel
I don't know why it works like that, or what I'm doing
wrong
But the neighborhood always gets better, just as soon as I am
gone

The Cemetery's Symmetry

The cemetery's symmetry
It's rows and rows and rows of stones
Sit atop the rows and rows and rows
Of dead and rotting bones

Thanksgiving

We thank you for the land we stole
For it is beautiful indeed
Or was, until we plowed the whole
Place up, and ripped out all the trees

A virgin land of wooded hills
With mountain streams and waterfalls
Where we have built the interstate
With parking lots and shopping malls

We thank you for the Indians
Who helped us out when times were rough
Who taught us how to plant the corn
And lots of other useful stuff

We thank you for the Iroquois,
Algonquin and Arapahoe
We're sorry that they all are dead
Along with all the buffalo

We thank you for the food, of course
Which we have sprayed with pesticides
And now, genetically, it may be
Just a little modified

We thank you for our President
So brave and strong, who will persist
In fighting all those threats against us
Which do not, in fact, exist

And so, today, we give thee thanks
We drink a toast, we hoist a cup
To all the good things that we have
We'll find a way to mess them up

The Kiss

The Internet is a meeting of minds
You never know what you will find
But, of course, it can't replace
Those meetings that are face to face
We empathize, we understand
When we are meeting, hand to hand
And nothing can replace the trip
Of meeting someone lip to lip

Air

We share the air
It's only fair
It fills the sky, it's everywhere
And there is plenty there to spare
And this, of course, is good
Because, if they could find a way
To bottle it, and make us pay
I have no doubt they would

Sunset

The bright orange orb hanging low in the sky
Is a glorious orgy of light
Memorializing the day that's gone by
As it signals the start of the night

A day of bright hopes and a day of dark fears
Of new sights and sensations and sounds
A day of sweet laughter and bitter salt tears
As the world spins one more time around

But the light that we see is a miniscule trace
Of the nuclear forces at play
We're really quite lucky to be in a place
That is just the right distance away

There is no lie in the light that we see
The sun is on fire, quite literally

Subtitles

The titles play a vital part
In the moviemaker's art
So those who live in foreign lands
Also get to understand
For all the meaning they convey
There is another role they play
The titles spread across the screen
Serve as a caption for the scene
Reminding us that, in the end
The *moving* picture's just pretend
For all the action, and the thrills
It's still a series, made of stills

The Fart

My stomach was filled up with gas
A turbulent and heavy mass
I knew, somehow, it had to pass
And so it did, right out my ass
I must admit, that it was crass

I slammed my finger in a door
I've done it many times before
My head was filled with rage and pain
Pressing in upon my brain
And so I shouted, loud and clear
Words that I won't mention here
They didn't cure the finger's pain
But in a way I can't explain
I felt a bit relieved, I guess
That the pain had been expressed

Angry words, and loudly swore
Are mental farts, and nothing more

The People On TV

The people on TV
Never sit and watch TV
And that is how they're different
From folks like you and me

Why I Love To Dance

I love to dance
It gives me the chance
To see, to smell, to touch
Those people who are of the sex
that I admire so much

If you never get out of your chair
All that you can do is sit and stare

Poetry Is Magic



Poetry Is Magic

Poetry is magic
It's a little bit
Like therapy
A way to rid
Your body of
The atrophy
And agony
The doubts and the
Anxieties
The fear and the
Frustrations which
Affect us all
Internally
That coalesce
Until it truly seems
We need to let it out
In one big scream

Poetry is magic
It's a little bit
Like therapy
The metaphors
Meander through
A field of
Broken imagery
And Freudian symbology
To understand
Our hidden dreams
The secret stories
Of our lives
We stumble on
The most revealing scenes
Whenever we go walking
Through our dreams

Poetry is magic
It's the tale within
The tapestry
The secret door
Between imagination
And reality
A portal to
The pseudo-worlds
Which co-exist
Eternally
With what we live in
Physically
It brings together
That which was apart
The combination is
The poet's art

Poetry is magic
It's the power to
Communicate
To express our
Thoughts in terms that
Other minds can
Integrate, and
Thus we span the
Gulf between our
Quite distinct
Existences
Eliminating
Distances, we're
Not so far apart
We're all one kind
From mind to mind
And sometimes
Heart to heart

Poetry is magic
It's a chant, an
Invocation
It's a calling
On the spirits
In a sense of
Supplication
It's a corn dance
It's an offering
A shaking of
The gourd.....The pen's
A magic wand
And thus, more potent
Than the sword
We write the words
To match the tunes
As ancient druids
Cast the runes

Poetry is magic
It's a reading
Of the ritual
A quest for ancient
Wisdom, it's
A casting of
A spell, and the
Poem's timeless
Power holds the
Eons in an hour
And the universe's vastness
In a tiny room
As well
All time and space
Is now subjected
To the human race

Poetry is magic
It's a mojo
It's a talisman
An amulet
Containing
The sweet essence
Of eroticism
If our lovers
Understood the
Depth of feeling
That we feel, it
Seems as if it
Couldn't help but
Add a bit to
Our appeal
Or so we hope
And if we fail
At least it helps
Us cope

Poetry is magic
It's a vision
It's a prophecy
A plan to shape
The world to our
Conception of
What it should be
A prototype
Of fantasy
The words of poems
Are seeds we sow
In gardens where
Ideas can grow

I want to plant
A seed inside your mind
And by tomorrow
Who knows what we'll find