

**autumn harvest**



**selected poems 1989-2000  
by christopher m. brinson**

## autumn harvest

hello.  
this is me.  
autumn finds me harvesting by the light of the moon.

this is all that i ever have been up to this point. but it is not all that i will ever be. it could be, however, a glimpse of things to come

who is to know. we can remember the past, experience the present, but we have no way of predicting the future. we can only make broad generalizations.

astrology does not predict the future any better than aspirin can cure the common cold.

this is me.

you know me-you've seen me. i put the groceries on the shelves of your supermarket, i mowed your yard twenty years ago. i casually smiled at you and wished you good afternoon in the elevator last week. waiting in line at the department store, you made conversation about the weather with a stranger-that stranger was me.

now we are strangers no more.

i am every one,  
every person,  
every man.

you see me walking every day, lonely in the streets-  
taking my lunch in the park-  
ascending the stairs of an apartment every evening.

i am everywhere in the cities during the day  
i am out in the suburbs on saturday morning  
i am farming the fields.  
i am slowly killing myself in the Factories.

that's me sitting behind the desk too-  
pushing paper from location to location.  
that's me sleeping on a park bench-  
i am homeless and hungry, look at me.

this is me.  
right here.

on this page.

i bring my harvest in for autumn  
and hope that it will sustain me until spring

i am looking in the mirror now.  
i see what i have always seen.

this is me.

### **life signs**

rowing.

before the break  
of dawn.

my arms making  
perfect

circular motion  
with the

oars.

cutting

a shallow channel  
through

the undisturbed  
lake with my

boat.

feeling

it's necessary to  
apologize

for having interfered  
with the

solitude.

11.16.1995

### **crossroads**

while walking without  
direction,

i came upon a calico cat  
lost in the weeds.

i picked her up(i'm sure to  
her delight)

so she would be lost no  
longer,

figuring that if i couldn't  
find way,

at least i could make her  
think that she

was finding a safe passage  
to a home.

8.10.1994

**salinas, california**

no books burning this morning,  
only rubbish gathering  
against the curbside.

a cafe sign reads, "eat here,  
john steinbeck did!"

down the highway, migrant  
workers harvest vegetables

in the same fields their  
ancestors had.

day turns to night and the trucks  
leave for market.

9.11.2000



**night poem**

lonely.  
wind blows.

gusts bring clouds  
floating over  
trees.

coldness  
calls to me

as i watch the full  
moon rising

silence  
creeps over  
the lake as someone

burns a fire on  
the other  
side.

11.6.1995

**caption**

i'm the venerable little  
barbarian

who had a small brain  
and weak muscles.

i dwelt in cities made of  
concrete and steel,

i'm so happy to be preserved  
for you in this museum.

8.10.2000



**keeping pace**

cell phones and pagers  
and prozac with booze

porno and cocaine is  
now yesterday's news.

8.10.2000

**green graffiti**

save our  
ozone

grow more  
pot.

5.14.1996

**this page**

left intentionally  
blank.

5.14.1996

## **forgotten**

the dough was made  
and poured in  
the pan,

in the oven it began to  
rise to a golden  
brown

as the loaf emerged  
it filled the room  
with warmth

displayed in the window  
to cool before it  
was eaten

slices were cut and  
hastily consumed  
for supper

then the remains were put  
in the cupboard where  
they became stale.

11.12.1990

## **abandoned**

a pair of glasses cracked  
and scratched sit  
waiting

next to a ceramic coffee cup  
empty and gathering  
dust

watching over a walking cane  
leaning alone in the  
corner.

7.30.1996



## street prophet

music!  
music is the key.  
the answer in the melody  
moving to the rhythm machine.  
can you feel it, can you get in the groove.  
if you can't, don't blame god.

god is love  
make love not war  
drop acid not bombs  
these bombs are falling on me like rain  
that's how i got be in the situation  
i am in today.

food.  
i need food for the soul  
need food to feed the brain.  
haven't ate since nineteen sixty-three  
i'm so hungry.

attention children.  
i'll now pass around the plate  
for this morning's offer of love  
brother can you spare a dime?

9.8.2000

## pilgrim

amidst the drunks prostitutes, tourists  
and street performers down on  
bourbon street

stands a solitary gentlemen pushing  
around a white wooden cross

raising his bible into the air, he calls  
into the night for sinners to  
becomes saints.

6.30.1996



## like it or not

james dean, grace kelly, marilyn monroe,  
john lennon, jim morrison, jimi hendrix,  
john kennedy, robert kennedy,

and martin luther king, malcom x, john belushi,  
keith moon, kurt cobain, janis joplin,  
and most of all elvis presley,

are all dead.  
dead, dead, dead

they're never coming back, not living in disguise  
not watching over you, not up in rock and  
roll heaven waiting to make an encore

just dead.  
dead, dead, dead

get it through your mind and go  
on with life for christ sake.

6.9.1992

## evening news

three murders, two rapes  
and one fire in the  
city,

a flash flood, tornado and  
people are left homeless  
in georgia,

democrats and republicans  
impeaching the president  
in washington,

yankees lost, owners mad  
the players proclaimed  
a strike today

turn it off, go to bed, continue  
with life, same shit  
different day.

8.10.1994

## **faith alone**

please talk clearly  
if at all possible

because

i can barely hear  
your voice

as it fades in and  
out

like a broadcast  
nearing it's

end,

i am blind, searching  
for your beacon

feeling my way  
through the

dark.

11.18.1995

## **planning ahead**

harvesting the gardens  
of spring today-

putting them up in the  
pantry next to the

pickles and jam.

so that in one future  
winter, i can return

to them

when there is only  
death, ice and

lonliness outside.

4.13.1993

## **fifteen seconds**

three balls, two strikes  
with a runner on first,  
there are two men out.

the pitcher bends over  
to glimpse the signals  
from catcher with mask.

the first he shakes off  
for the second the same,  
finally a nod of approval.

erectly he stands straight  
as his tension shows, he  
eyes the runner on first-

and for that man, he  
knows that safety is  
only ninety feet away.

as his hand floats down  
into his glove, he adjusts  
his fingers on the laces,

sweat trickles off his  
brow and he breathes  
as he begins a windup

he is no longer a man,  
rather a complex machine  
using the laws of physics

his arms go behind as  
he stretches above and  
arm comes over his head-

like a roman catapult  
the ball speeds forward  
for a rendezvous with fate.

the batter with dreams of  
casey, closes eyes and  
swings with full might

the runner starts to go,  
wanting to accelerate  
but it no longer matters

casey has missed and  
the pitcher is victorious  
hero for at least a day.

10.3.1989



## **titan**

ted williams is sitting quietly somewhere in a failing  
body, tightly clenching his louisville slugger

but he still doesn't give a damn about what pleases the  
public

and he yells out to his new progeny-

give 'em hell boys, show 'em what you're made of,  
take no prisoners.

i know

he's got a web site out in cyberspace where he's smiling  
like the possum who ate the peach-

there is a hot white blaze burning in the  
depth of his eyes

that is not of this world.

8.10.2000

## **dandelion**

the rocket explodes into  
the hot july night

sending forth flowering  
seeds that expand

furiously outward in every  
direction assuring

that it will always be  
remembered

even if it is seen no more  
after this night

3.29.1994

## **i'm on vacation**

driving the long interstate,  
eight hundred miles

across texas.

counting the mile markers  
one after the other.

still not giving up hope  
that i will see

the exit ramp for sesame  
street.

3.14.1995

## left for dead

sleeping  
and paralyzed  
caught in a dream

prisoner  
of my own  
fears and folly

no way  
to alert the  
outside of my condition

hoping  
for a faint  
stimulus to awaken me.

10.30.1996

## farmer's haikus

**i.**

plant crops in april  
at the start of the new moon  
in cold morning dew.

**ii.**

harvest the bounty  
after dusk under the bright  
september full moon.

**iii.**

men toil in the sun  
while the cows sleep in the shade  
all the summer long.

**iv.**

my grandfather said  
that a ten inch rain was one drop  
every ten inches.

8.27.1993

## ashes

december is blue.  
i could plunge into it  
like a child falling from  
a cliff into the river-  
forever i would tread  
water and float  
as i watch others  
raking the pages of  
their lives, yellow  
and crumbled, as leaves  
into empty ditches-  
where they ignite the  
piles for one last breathe  
of warmth while gazing  
upon the clean lawn of a  
blue december evening.

12.5.1997

## modern myth

the cult of elvis  
lives on though  
he's years dead.  
among the blue  
and white hairdos  
in viva las vegas.  
but the damage  
is done. prometheus  
has given his holy  
flame to humanity.  
and the subways  
are still painted  
in london with  
prophet's graffiti  
proclaiming that  
"clapton is god"  
the heroes are now  
a dime to the dozen  
and the newspapers  
headline a new  
martyr everyday.

12.25.1997

## receptacle

slowly, the black car  
approaches then

signals-

parking between two  
others-

she enters the passenger  
side where(i assume)

conversation takes  
place.

she then exits, slamming  
the door

and as the car leaves, a  
taxi is

waved into the  
spot.

taking her far away-  
now.

the wind blows all  
the city trash

against the empty  
curb.

8.8.1998

## passenger

i wake up again still in texas  
it's saturday morning outside  
the newspaper hasn't arrived  
i decide to have chili for  
breakfast.

not cooked over open flame,  
but leftovers from days ago  
simmering in the refrigerator  
now being bombarded by  
microwave.

it's saturday morning outside  
my windows are frosty cold  
this whole world seems ready  
to stay in their homes and  
hibernate.

i take the first timid spoonful  
from a blue tupperware bowl  
feel it slowly traverse my body  
all systems seem ready upon  
wake-up-call.

it's still saturday and i'm in texas  
coldness radiates off the window  
all my systems are functioning  
and the train is leaving for another  
destination

1.10.2000



## renovation project

looking down from an  
elevated highway,

the walls

of buildings crumble  
into

mounds

of twisted steel  
strings-

connecting chaotic  
chunks

of concrete

a brief, fleeting  
sculpture

of the

wrecking  
ball.

6.23.1998

## holy man

this page is a sanctuary for  
all the words and phrases

that could never find a  
home elsewhere-

here

they are welcome and safe  
from the world who has

made them outcasts-

they

will never suffer from  
starvation and

lonliness again

i

will protect them from  
the void of darkness

they have known.

12.22.1999

**and**

then i  
turn

the corner,

away from the  
wind that  
blows

trash against  
the street

curb-

i can't hear  
anything

during the  
morning

commotion,

nor can i  
see.

all

is a blur as if  
i were

emerging from  
a dream.

11.27.1998

**some days**

you wake up and  
instinctively

turn the kitchen  
faucet on

the water looks like  
it has been sitting

at the bottom of a  
rusty bucket

or nails for two  
years.

you close your  
eyes to

take the medicine  
and it tastes

even worse.

but you keep on  
swallowing

because you know  
it's supposed to

be good for you.

2.15.1999

## economics of the self

the dollar has got me cornered  
the dollar has got me where it wants me  
the dollar has got my shoulders down on the mat

it wants to enshroud my heart  
it wants to cover my eyes  
it wants to fill my ears  
it wants to keep the truth away.

and if i let it

the dollar will turn me into a cold  
singular white point  
in the darkness of Space.

the dollar pulls my strings  
like a wooden marionette-

lift your left arm, it tells me  
wave with your right hand, it demands  
take one step forward and reach into your pocket, it says

now.

eat big mac  
drink coca cola  
shop at wal mart

and  
in the dollar, i must trust.

there, there.

good little puppet, is assures me  
the show is over and it's time to  
get back in your box.

the dollar closes the lid on me and only  
the dollar can let me out

that is all, it says

goodnight.

3.4.2000

## ant farm

building  
building in the city  
building on corners that were vacant  
building upon rubble before the dust settles

building, building, building

building in the suburbs  
building two story brick homes  
building sidewalks that lead to libraries and churches  
building supermarkets and department stores

building skyscrapers, domed stadiums and parking lots  
building thirty screen movie cinemas for the herds of young  
americans

building bigger and better  
building up and down  
building left and right

building bill boards where cattle had grazed  
building along highways where wildflowers grew

building trailer house parks  
building mega-apartment complexes for luxury living  
building roads, free ways and bridges that connect all the dots

also

building new technologies for a better tomorrow  
building global computer networks  
building digital cyber communities

building, building, building

building in every damn direction  
building around the clock in three shifts

building never stops,  
building that has no end.  
building until i am deaf  
building until i am blind

building, building, building

3.5.2000



**just add water**

sitting beneath florescent skies at  
the airport italian cafe-

waiting.

eating oldie, moldie pizza that's been  
baking under a three hundred  
watt

heat lamp for  
seventeen hours.

the human comedy unfolds before  
my eyes on a television  
tuned into

the british broadcasting  
corporation-

i file the news into the dark corners  
of my mind where i can  
return to it

one day.

it's time  
to pop another pill and ease this

pain.

and i wonder if this could all be a  
figment of my american  
imagination.

when

the hours pile upon the hours  
it begins to remind me of

the notes of a beautiful  
symphony.

12.18.1998



**warm up**

hello.  
and good morning.

testing one, two  
three

are you on?  
do you hear me?

pleased to meet you  
mr. ibm

typewriter.

i will be at your  
controls today.

who the hell needs  
microsoft.

you sound like an  
old refrigerator

i once knew, yet you  
seem to be in

working order.

which direction do we  
fly today?

is there a departure gate  
or an arrival time?

no matter,  
though

it's the ride alone  
that

counts.

11.2.1999

## generation gap

i hand her the monthly  
payment while she  
makes small talk

i notice that

along with pictures of her  
grandchildren and the  
weekly shopping

list,

the landlord's wife has an eight  
by eleven inch photo of  
ronald reagan on

her refrigerator.

she's impressed that i pay  
the rent on time, hold  
down a steady job

and

help the senior citizens bring  
in their groceries from  
their cars.

she thinks i am a good  
conservative young  
man you would

never be caught dead hanging  
out at rock concerts

or voting democrat for  
president-

unlike the bastard who  
had married her  
daughter

only to run away with the  
children and the

money.

i smile and let her talk  
away until she runs  
out of air.

then

i walk back up to my  
apartment and

drink milk straight from  
the carton.

closing the refrigerator  
door, i notice that  
it's totally

white.

11.21.1999

**note to "self"**

no motels or hotels available  
in old san antonio

tonight.

not a single damn room in the  
entire city

believe me.

i've looked on every street,  
knocking on doors-

blinking "no vacancy" in  
red neon signs.

"what the hell?"  
....i ask myself,

is the national convention of  
hardware salesmen here  
this weekend?

it's february for god's sake  
....the "off season".

february!

i'll never ride into town again  
wearing nothing but my  
underwear.

sometimes,  
you gotta burn before you learn-

and this,  
happens to be one of those times.

i've made this ill-fated bed,  
now i'm condemned to  
stay in it.

so.

i roll up the windows and floor  
the accelerator-

there's ten hours of desert out  
there, beyond the sunset

before

i cross over into the  
next

time zone.

12.13.1998



**on the edge**

looking out upon  
the

horizon-

i see nothing  
but cold

blank

white pages of  
paper-

and then i feel  
insanity

overcoming my  
mind.

5.9.1999

**before you leave**

please

call when you  
get to texas-

so i can hear  
whispers

of the wide  
open

prairies-

and

write to me from  
california-

for it is  
said

that the pacific  
is cold

and clear-

ready to wash  
away

history.

5.14.1999

**for best results play at maximum volume**

goodnight godzilla  
for i hardly  
knew ya-

may your dreams be of  
puppy dogs,

butterflies and atomic  
mushroom clouds

tonight-

because when we wake up  
in the morning

our train stops in  
america

where a fat and  
unsuspecting

society

is there for you to  
sharpen your

teeth and claws on.

listen here.

with the right manager  
and web site

we're gonna make you  
a superstar again,

baby.

9.6.1999

## origin of species

a kiwi is a small and  
flightless nocturnal

bird-

but it's also any citizen  
of the country new  
zealand.

this she tells me

as she pulls back the  
covers,

slides into bed with  
socks still on

and invites me in with  
a glance

apparently,

this is how small  
kiwis are

made.

9.7.1999

## pausing

hey.  
not calibrated  
please do not use.

look.  
out of tune  
please don't play.

see.  
wet paint  
don't touch it.

wait.  
think it  
over before jumping.

stop.  
just shut  
up and don't think.

we'll  
do the  
thinking for you.

4.27.1997

## **untouchable**

sentimentally  
cynical.

bouncing back  
and forth

between two polar  
opposite sides.

like a ping pong  
ball-

never resting in  
the midst.

each side propels  
me to the

other-

a pendulum going  
tick-tock.

i'm a perpetual machine  
of motion.

watch me.

as i defy the laws of  
physics.

5.9.1997

## **domino theory**

money is power  
and

power corrupts,

corruption  
corrodes.

corrosion stays  
and works

slowly.

digging deeper  
until only a

hull remains

where a body once  
was.

a body totally  
devoid

of substance.

5.12.1997

## **moment of terror**

thinking out loud, dreaming  
with my eyes wide open.

in hopes of a visionary,  
perhaps even a  
luminary

to visit me in the night.

pausing my rhythm and  
moving my eyes-

there goes the chute  
of the gallows,

the high pitched swish  
of the guillotine.

death is in the distance

but my attention shifts to an  
empty spot upon the  
family mantle

where this terrible episode  
will one day be

commemorated

after death has come to  
collect me.

5.28.1997

## **neurosis**

circumstances wouldn't permit.  
seven months down the crapper,  
"i'm sorry," she said then added  
"perhaps we'll get together in  
our next lives...."

"yeah," i said, "a hell of a lot  
of good that does me in  
this life"

she casually shrugged her  
shoulders.

here and now, that is all that  
matters, say i. even if i did  
believe in reincarnation,

i'd never want to run across  
another robot like her.

6.1.1997

### **sleep walk**

to the florescent lights  
i walked into  
the

supermarket.

pushing a cart up  
and down the  
aisles

winding around mothers  
with their babies

selecting from the quiet  
dusty shelves

but then abandoning  
my groceries

and wandering back  
into the cold.

5.15.1998

### **my friend**

i grow fat and  
apathetic

with cynicism

it tastes good  
like

chocolate cake.

it's all for  
free on

television.

big foot was  
spotted

again yesterday.

i'd like to shake  
his hand.

6.1.1998

## **imprisoned**

like a streak of sentimentality  
that bites as a hidden snake,

i linger to watch the rolling  
movie credits in a cold

theater.

there is a symphony playing  
as i drift into an ever so  
casual sleep

lines and circles behind eyes  
turn into my clinging  
remnants of the

american dream

i don't even have time to hold  
on to it before my mind

has spiraled into the dark  
ages of history.

grasping and then screaming  
my eyes open-

the screen is blank and lights  
are on, but the doors

have been locked by the  
usher.

4.19.1998

## **waiting**

the solitary fisherman  
upon the ocean  
wall again

tonight.

his gear propped into  
it's place,

constantly peering into  
the sea,

challenging the tide that  
slowly creeps in

like sleep that overcomes  
a weary traveler.

4.25.1998

### **beginning**

neither retirement  
nor pension,

for the farmer,  
lonely.

he toils and  
he

sweats.

even until midnight  
strikes

under the harvest  
moon.

unappreciated,  
though

he feeds the  
world.

5.29.1998

### **park bench poem**

gentle breeze  
caresses

the trees-

autumn leaves  
carefully

fall around  
a lone

woman

who feeds the  
pigeons as

if she were  
painting

her masterpiece.

6.4.1998



## **russian roulette**

it's this simple.

upon a blank white  
page,

war is waged.

courage  
is required-

you have to be ready  
to kill the enemy

and

occasionally

you have to be able to  
point the gun at  
your own

head and  
pull the trigger.

click.

4.30.98

## **reasoning**

this is not the end.

no end is an end  
in and of

itself.

merely a point where  
you have to pause

and decide to begin  
again.

time  
to breath, to sleep,

to dream.

to wake up in the  
morning

and feel renewed,  
goodnight.

8.10.1998

## scenes from an airport

i.

los angeles international is  
my asylum after a  
fifteen hour flight-

here i join all the other  
loonies,

waiting for their next  
connection.

texas

seems so far away.

you can understand if i'm  
not in a particularly  
good mood-

i haven't slept or bathed  
in

twenty four hours  
and my

mind is an ocean  
away.

ii.

i used the handicapped toilets  
twice

i took my time.  
i enjoyed myself.  
i didn't feel guilty.

(sometimes, i'm not "politically  
correct")

a man, dressed rather  
nicely, asked me to give  
him twenty dollars.

i refused.  
i left him stranded in l.a.  
i am unemployed.  
i wasn't the "good samaritan".

perhaps i will goto hell  
for these random acts of

maliciousness  
but i don't care

iii.

still waiting on the plane.....

i want to be left alone.  
i am not making eye contact.  
i have taken refuge in an isolated corner.

no eye contact, no eye contact

keep your eyes to yourself, let  
them drift and you

nail yourself as an easy  
target.

perhaps some music will  
soothe the nerves

of this savage  
beast.

iv.

at last, finally.

there's my airplane-  
see?

do you see?

the attendant is calling my  
number loudly.

you see.....

(it's this "in between  
state that's bothered me,

i haven't felt "myself"  
for a day.)

i don't ask forgiveness

last call, i'm leaving,  
see you-

when i land.

6.25.1998

## **an informal, incomplete history of popular music**

what used to be called heavy metal  
is now called classic rock-

and the hair gel bands of the eighties  
are now having career revivals

because generation x has the money to  
spend on remember their wild youthful days.

what was once considered country music  
is now only played from scratchy forty-fives

on old juke boxes in road side stops  
somewhere out in west texas.

while modern country music has about as much  
"soul" as a scoop of vanilla ice cream

and reminds me a lot of the radio jingles  
i hear for coca-cola, pepsi and chevrolet.

as for modern rock, there seems to be a  
shortage days, perhaps rock is dead,

you know, you can only play a guitar so loud  
according to the laws of physics

and this had already been done some twenty  
five years ago,

if there are any new notes or words out there,  
you'd have to find them with a microscope.

there is even an obscure genre called  
alternative country played by

blue collar boys from places you've never heard  
of live belleville, illinois and festus, missouri

yes i know, i haven't mentioned rap music but  
so what, what cares, i haven't mentioned any

number of other things that are probably worth  
mentioning, this is my history, not yours...

so, in parting,  
i'll leave you with these words of wisdom.

and that is this...

there's really only two types of music-  
there's the blues and then there's Zippedy-Do-Dah

and you can take that to the bank for  
whatever it's worth, friend.

8.10.1999

## rehabilitation

while i am

contemplating the hot plate of  
mexican food beneath  
my nose

my analyst sits across the table in  
an empty chair, eating a book  
of postmodern american

poetry.

"you know that stuff will kill  
you," he says, referring  
to the food i eat,

i recklessly come out  
of my trance to  
answer him-

"yeah," i muse, picking up the  
knife and pointing it at  
my neck, "so would  
this!"

he lets of a wry smile  
and speaks again

"you eat to fill the emptiness  
left from a childhood  
tragedy."

now.

i point the knife at  
his neck

"listen here, " i say, "freud was  
a molester of children and  
jung was a dropout

from the school of nazi  
medicine.

hearing this, my analyst  
throws up his  
hands

saying,

"no need to get personal,"  
and then vanishes in  
a puff of

spontaneous combustion.

finally,

i am alone somewhere  
in texas,

i take my first bite of food  
as the rain begins to fall

outside

3.8.1999

## idle time

waiting  
waiting for the sun to set  
waiting for the moon to rise  
waiting for the phone to ring  
waiting for the weekend to arrive

waiting for roads to be repaired  
waiting for the traffic lights to change  
waiting for trains to pass me by  
waiting, always waiting

waiting for rain  
waiting for light  
waiting for the weather man who's  
waiting on the news tonight

waiting behind counters at the market and  
waiting on the computers that are down

waiting for service  
waiting in the line  
waiting for people writing checks  
waiting there as i lose my mind

waiting.

waiting in an airport  
waiting on a plane  
waiting for the connection  
waiting there all the time

waiting for politicians  
waiting for universal healthcare coverage  
waiting for another senseless murder that's  
waiting to happen

waiting for castro to die and  
waiting for europe to unify, i'm  
waiting for globalization  
waiting for america lagging behind

waiting for justice and  
waiting for peace while i am  
waiting on a dozen countries  
waiting to drop their bomb

waiting, waiting, waiting

waiting for my words to catch up with my thoughts  
waiting to be spoken from within my mind

waiting

waiting to live  
waiting to die

waiting for a time when there will be no more  
waiting

waiting to be set free from this endless circle of  
waiting

waiting, waiting, waiting,

4.12.1999

## cross sectional

### I.

my mind is on overload today  
the warp engines are on ten and  
captain kirk is asking for eleven,

what to do..  
what to do..

what  
to  
do

everybody that i know is half way  
around the world ten thousand  
miles away

while i am

sitting alone watching the rain fall  
in new zealand sipping hot tea

i'm living out of a suitcase-  
my passport is under my pillow-  
the return ticket in a book-

i bought breakfast today and  
sat on the sidewalk to eat-

but the cops came to take  
me away.

### II.

back and forth  
around and around

i do not know fantasy from  
reality

i wake up every morning and  
have to figure out where i am

i just got a haircut-  
i bough a new shirt-  
i am "blending in"

just a blade of grass upon a lawn  
of three point seven million

america is the enemy  
america is the big, bad wolf  
she has infiltrated the cracks of the sidewalks  
she is the rain coming from the clouds

who's afraid of the big bad wolf?  
the big bad wolf?  
the big bad wolf?

i'm not afraid of the big, bad wolf  
(we don't need no stinkin' wolves)

are the wolves hungry?  
let them eat at McDonalds

are the wolves thirsty?  
let the drink Coca Cola.

### III.

i have forgotten to mention  
what evil men can do-

they are up late, all hours watching you through  
their computers  
they know your name, they know your number  
and e-mail address

it's all on the internet  
out there waiting for you  
on the information superhighway  
on the "world wide web"

and

we are just files caught in this web-  
terrified of the Spider  
the Spider is coming  
creepy, crawly eight legged Spider

speaking of terror-  
i read about old Charles Manson today,  
he's got HIS own web page  
he writes his own folk songs  
he is waiting there in california  
he's got a miniature zoo of lizards and snakes

helter skelter, helter skelter  
wicked man got them googely eyes  
i'm knocking on the door, but he ain't home.

### IV.

could i be nearing THE END?  
are we now in orbit around a class "M: planet?  
slow to one quarter impulse power  
it's life, but not as we know it

a scratchy old record is playing on a turntable  
it sounds like a machine making popcorn  
in the lobby of a movie theater  
back in nineteen fifty-three

i'll take mine with butter and salt  
what's good for the soul ain't necessarily  
good for the body

Fuck it.

it's the soul that is Eternal  
and he body is only food for Worms

the little blind earthworms burrowing,  
endlessly through the ground only  
seeing light when they are  
used as bait.

the movie is starting  
and i've never seen this one before

so be very quiet!  
(i'm hunting wabbits.)

i'm staying until the end  
shhhh....

10.21.1998



## **a bit of beethoven**

at stage's edge is the  
conductor

upon the podium he  
towers over

his ranks

when he lifts his hands  
and starts the  
beat

violin bows begin to  
bob up and down,

trumpet players puff  
their cheeks,

and trombones lay a  
a deep foundation,

softly the song begins  
but it climaxes

with a furious explosion,

the piece has ended,  
yet the air is no longer stale

in this auditorium.  
tonight.

12.19.1990

## **doodle**

doodle,  
doodle, doodle,  
doodle, doodle, doodle

doodle,  
a poodle  
today i doodled a poodle.

doodle,  
i doodled a poodle,  
that i thought up in my noodle.

doodle  
doodle, poodle  
doodle, poodle, noodle.

doodle,  
then i fed the poodle,  
he ate the whole kit-and-kaboodle.

doodle,  
the poodle thanked my noodle,  
he said "cock-a-doodle, doodle".

doodle?  
cock-a-doodle-doodle?  
me and my insane noodle.

doodle,  
doodle, doodle,  
doodle, doodle, doodle.

5.11.1994

## growing up with jane

hey look!

there goes jane fonda

sexy, 1967, jane fonda

daughter of henry, jane fonda

sister to captain america, jane fonda

barbarella galactic-space cadet, jane fonda

hey look!

there goes jane fonda

smarter, grown up, jane fonda

the activist and feminist, jane fonda

working nine to five to try to make a living, jane fonda

tumbling through the desert with robert redford, jane fonda

hey look!

there goes jane fonda

nineteen eighty-something, jane fonda

what a great plastic surgeon, jane fonda

hugging her father on golden pond, jane fonda

married to the richest man in america, jane fonda

hey look!

there goes jane fonda

saving the spotted owl, jane fonda

divorcing millionaire ted turner, jane fonda

presenting the best actress academy award, jane fonda

must be so fun at the top looking down on the people, jane fonda.

5.4.2000

