

Echoes in the Darkness
by
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Hurricane

The air cries out in expectation
of the touch of sea and sky.
Tortured sentries face the onslaught,
creaking limbs,
their whispered sighs.
With timeless skill
the Beast approaches.
Flashing fangs
pierce salt-burned eyes.
The time has come to greet the taker.
With grasping claws,
the seas arise.

The Passing of the Storm

These are our ways, and have been
since time before memory.

With its passing,
we scamper from our huts
to view the footprints
of the Beast from the sea
and to tally our losses;
stunned animals,
we are startled by the day.
The air is fast and thick.
The darkness that follows
is overpowering,
save the flickers of candles
and distant lightning,
a surrealistic caricature
of aboriginal night.

The high priests of civilization have come.
The pole climbers and light givers
arrive from distant lands
and from our midst.
And when the chatter of Katydid is silenced
by the clatter of air conditioners,
we give thanks to Man.

Prologue

I quietly sit and await your return,
 clouds boiling in a sea of expectation.
I knew you but briefly,
 one instant of the black abyss.

Your fury took what centuries had built;
 cloistered ponds
 and streams veiled in secrecy
 met you unaware.
With man at your bidding, they will never return.

I quietly sit and await your return.

Untitled

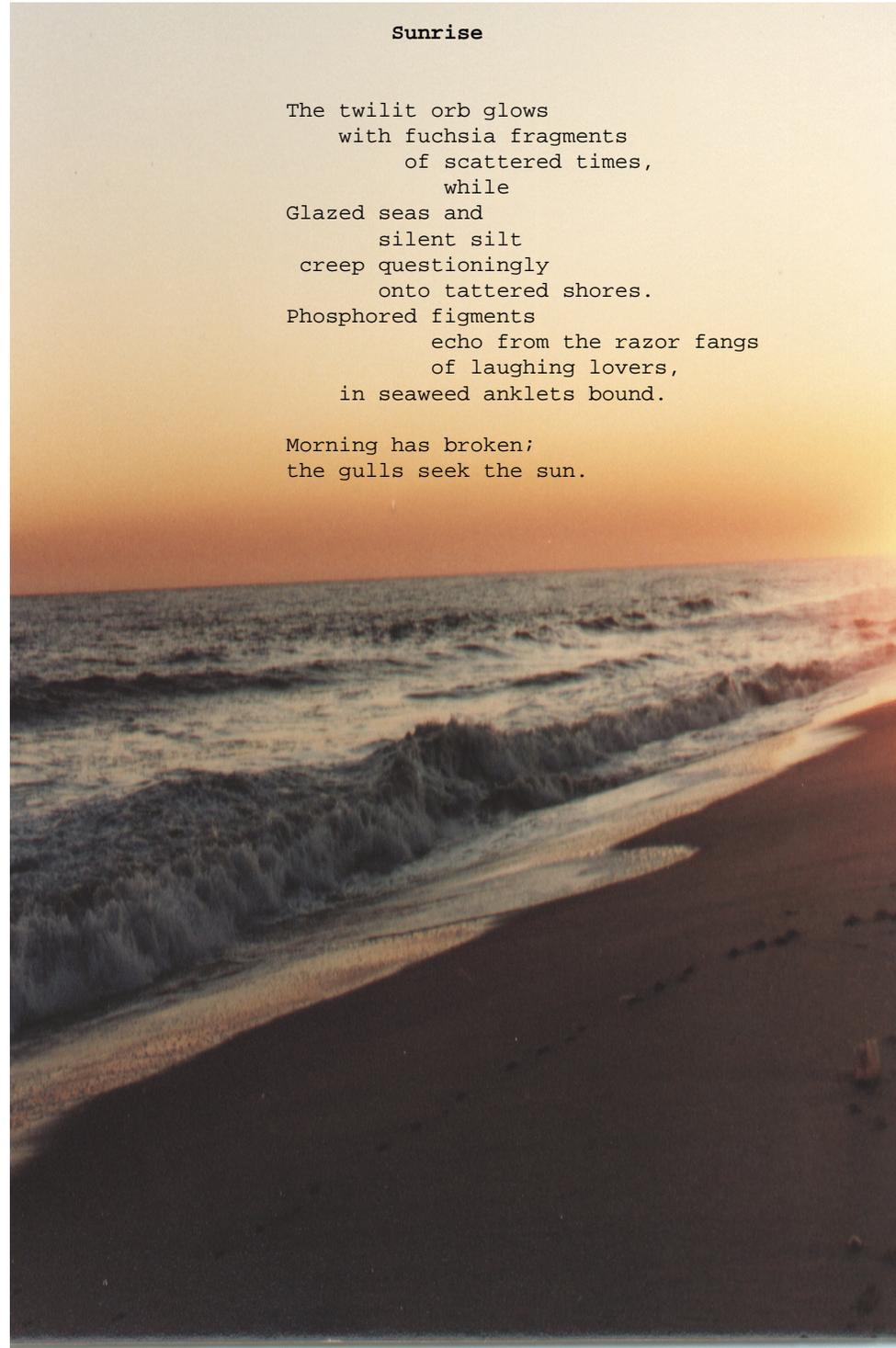
Beneath soft pillows
 and glistening skies,
 the jaws of darkness unfold.
Blinding fangs lash out
 against the weary travellers.

Gasping on the leaden air
 of darkest night,
I hear her calling to me
 With harnessed dreams
 and wild flowers.

Sunrise

The twilit orb glows
 with fuchsia fragments
 of scattered times,
 while
Glazed seas and
 silent silt
 creep questioningly
 onto tattered shores.
Phosphored figments
 echo from the razor fangs
 of laughing lovers,
 in seaweed anklets bound.

Morning has broken;
the gulls seek the sun.



Three Untitled Poems

And when the Darkness was lifted,
Life descended upon him
and took him for a lover
and his eyes were opened.

Lightning flashes
across the chill of crystal morning.
In a moan of distant thunder,
the earth shivers in expectation,
a multicolored scream of life concealed.

The haze hovers
on cloistered slopes,
As dawn raises her firesong
to meet the sun.
Metallic shields glisten coolly;
wide open eyes,
closed hearts conceal.

One night in Childhood

Time echoes through the spaces
of a firefly night . . .
From the blackest bogs,
horrible beasts emerge
casting whip-poor-will sounds
to confound their prey.
Shielded by the circle of porchlight,
I spit watermelon seeds into the night,
a juvenile dance
with the unseen.
"The bull is loose. Get the kids in the house."
My father rushes by;
in a flurry of flashlights,
they are swallowed by night.

While my mother checks me for ticks,
my inward gaze embraces
the gathering darkness.

Voices from the Machine

Speak to me
of the dark days
of the strange circus,
when death and snake oil
laid their claim.

Speak softly
and in quiet places
so that echoes don't deceive.

Describe to me the passage
of the gentle creatures,
and how,
in the midst of the firestorm
you offered me refuge under your shield.
When you faltered, I leant you my hand.
In your happiness, I rejoiced.

Dim reflections of dark eyes
were compassionate glimpses
through armor cold.

Speak to me of new life
and new pathways.

Share with me,
that I might know.

To Doe

Songs echo from
dawn's love,
feverish fingers
lost in space and time.

Electric night sighs sweetly
with seaweed scents
and brisk breezes.

The wheel turns; lives are milled
by waters returning to the sea.

Playful moments punctuate the years;
Love speaks in tongues,
but not in words.

Two Untitled Poems

Eyes aglaze
in gasping silence,
Through fleeting days
and clutching nights;
With tenderness, I share the fire.
With gratitude,
I face the light.

The flash of raw senses
in passion embraces
The capture
of a moment.

Hypothermia

Winter peers numbly
through the mask
of Indian Summer,
waiting patiently
to claim its own.
From the warming glow
of daylight,
the bay beckons;
her warm breath
and salt marshes
attract the seasoned
and seduce the young.
In answer to the siren call,
men struggle for life,
grasping desperately
for heat
and time
with aching limbs
and crumpled fists.

Notes from the Creek

There were pools of solitude
 untouched by the sun,
myriad microcosms, haphazardly hidden.
Monsters dwelled in the murky marsh,
 their wrath proclaimed by
 the echoing calls of
 Whip-poor-will night.
Storm tossed arbors arched over
 swirling springs,
precarious bridges
 across death and time.
And when the green plague descended,
 they were not ready.
It marched mindlessly, stealing Life
 for the lifeless.
Opossums waddled from homes destroyed
 to death on pavement altars.
When the woods fell, crafty raccoons shared
 a similar fate.
So man, too, was replaced by the Urban Machine,
 as I stared unknowing.

Night Poems

Night poems prowl the patterned darkness
 freeing clocks from frozen minds.
Unseen echoes erode the stillness,
 from lovers arms, so close entwined.

Untitled

Empty veins and scorched sinews,
 Life in form,
 but not in content,
In arid hills await their time.

Through patience,
 the conduits of the possible
 are flooded by the improbable.

Sleeping In

Comfortable creatures huddle under blankets
as the winter gale roars
outside a bedroom at dawn.

Numbing winds
slice dreams and possibilities
from the burdens of the day:

Sick children with attitudes
Work unfinished
Fiscal uncertainty

Police cars stand watch
at the bridges
to the city of the Shrine.

As the winds of war grow outside our windows,

we sleep.

Glimpses of Life

The numbing darkness
and muffled silence
are penetrated by luminous carvings,
Boundaries between the seer
and the seen.

Awareness flows mindlessly
over unknowable objects,
driven by elementary forces.

Streams converge in the sculpted canyons,
as they seek out the seas.

... In the stillness, your face is glowing.
Your eyes sparkle in
the candlelight;
Your breath brings meaning
to the night.

Lines in the Sand

My children ran
 down the sandy slopes
 to the water's edge.
They played with
 the moving lines
 of vanishing foam,
and screamed with delight
 as it turned upon them.

I showed them the signs
 of tide and storm,
like ancient markings
 on stone tablets.

We then built castles
 as offerings to the sea.

The Awakening

City streets whisper
 an alternative song of Life...

As the morning air blurs
 in anticipation of the heat
 of another summer day,
acrid odors evolve from
 maggot-ridden Black Bags
haphazardly piled at the curbside.
The smells of yesterday's menu
 ...gyros, pizza, hot dogs, and
 now unidentifiable forms of grease...
mix with sidewalk smears, to paint
 Images of the city
in volatile colors.

A feral rodent notices my presence briefly,
 then returns to his foraging.
Sounds of drilling begin.
The city awakens.

Lament of a Parasite

My best friend is dying
of a mindless, progressive disease.
Her skin is ravaged by scabs
and running sores;
Her life becoming that
of artificial support machines.
Yet they continue to whore her flesh
to those too blind to see.
For money they stop at nothing.

I recall the days of my youth;
the whippoorwill calls of the quiet night.
Yet even then the deer had withdrawn
into her wooded heart.
On the beach an occasional vehicle;
tents pitched at night without harassment.
But now the sores of civilization
leave nothing unmolested.
Multilaned highways of beachsand threaten the gulls;
moneygrabbers and signs, the people at night.
The near-woods have also begun to decay.

Nothing remains the same: all is transient.
But isn't life worth more than the inert,
to be treasured above steel, glass and money?

Long Island is dying at the hand of man.

Untitled

Hazy limbs
pale across twilit waters.
With fang
and claw
and open heart,
we listen to peeper-tales
of Spring.
Bound by beast and bride,
I hear growing sounds,
... not thunder,
not surf...
In darkness I gaze,
and I wonder.

Untitled

Morning turns breathlessly
from star-kissed skies
Her wide eyes quickened
against the light.

With Colorful Claws clutching molten minds
and fluid phobias,
through Dark days she whispers wearily,
Eyes swollen by songs unsung.

Where hide the harpies of the
murky mists?
...Tender tissues by talons torn...
...Hearts ache against the onslaught;
In waves they break,
carving caverns unseen,
Wind-whipped froth their rhythmic screams.

Alone among many,
she silently sleeps...
Dawn has turned from fire to ice.

Life on the Edge

Life on the edge
between life and the pit.
You carry the truth
but the pieces don't fit.
The predators stalk you
while they watch for a sign,
And the blade cuts you
right to the bone.
Caresses you, right to the bone.
They mindlessly march
with merciless mirth
See none but their own
in the sea or the earth
The fumes of hell follow
wherever they go

As they cut your life
straight to the bone.

Mount Saint Manhattan
has belched out its storm;
live ashes descending
in turbulent swarms.
Pine barrens are burning,
tar rivers run free,
bringing death from afar to the seas.

And Long Island lays dead in its breeze.
Your eyes don't greet me
anymore.
I wonder what our life was for.
What once was held in sacred trust
the urban Beast devours.

... And the blade cuts you
straight to the bone.
As the blood runs dry from the bone.

Weavers

The weavers of words
sad-sleepily sing
In yellow-lit houses
to the wordless new spring.

As the icicles melted
watch fall come again,
the wind whips leaves chillingly
from terror struck hands.
And the moon watches crisply as men
scamper past,
Too sharp and too weary to see 'til the last.

Jagged eyes piercingly shrink from the task
of life for just-now
with no future once-past,
But the warmth of the meadows
still smiles 'til the last
And the tide plays sweet mind-games
with your soul.

As the swell of love breaks softly on the shoreline,
Warm summer-smelling questions
bring purpose now to the naked rhyme
of laughter in the once-bright autumn trees.

Home

I live here now.
I used to just visit for the change,
but I never would have guessed how
much I'm needed here.
But now that I've already moved in,
I think I'll go back home
...Just for the change.

The Sirens

The sirens scream insanely.
"All is lost... to the shelters!"
"Why now of all times?"
"Why couldn't it come tomorrow?"
And the cries for peace become the
whispers of the dead.

What have we learned?

The hedonist

The trash can is green and flaming.
I watch with detached curiosity
as thirty seven freaks rush in with
their garden hoses.
I understand, but refuse to be hassled.
Leaving the subway, the flavor of the
air spurs me into action, and my
foot tastes the floor.
"Sensation is divine! Let consciousness
Swim in it forever!"
So I spit on the floor. Poor devils.
Don't they know?

Untitled

Watch the night swirl
 Its infinite colors
 Through your mobius life
 of becoming.
Savor the touch of your fluid body,
 And writhe your way into the sands
 of time.
The Time is approaching
 and your games will return
 To the rules

 Of entropy.

Nature

Tripping across the hilltop,
 I still wondered why,
but was struck by the awesome flash of light
from a solitary blade of grass.
Its texture was not smooth,
 but firm nevertheless.
Rain fell from the clouds above
 that masked the blue
 as I finally
 ate it.

The Wall*

The wall whispered to me last night,
 but I refused to answer.
It's always too sarcastic anyway.
It said there was no hope.
It said, "All is death."
I said absolutely nothing, but laughed as
I doused it with gasoline. In a moment it
was over.
There remains only one question.

How often do walls lie?

3:47PM*

I stepped on an anthill the other day.
It was big and harmless and the center of
a social order. It wasn't an accident. I
followed my last friend there when he also
joined them. I screamed insanely and stamped
on it until they arrested me for disorderly conduct.
I don't care. But I sure wish I could have gone.

The Rotted Tree*

The tree stands in the forest alone
so insignificant, so pure...
 surrounded by thousands.
Its bark peels under the forces of the insects
Its color diminished by the winds and rain
 Its fluid has long since vanished
from the fibrous tissues of life.
 But what is life without death?

*Previously published in "Eighteenth Gorgon," 1970,
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY

Parenting

Thunder, wind and rain.
Water seeps through unseen paths within our shells,
 leaving marks of character, lines of time.
We witness the effacement with indignation.
We shore up the dams.

We've brought our children to the sun,
 where earth meets the sea and sky,
 and taught them to drink from fresh springs.
Born in the innocence of the marshes,
 the waters of life mark our every day.
The love that shaped our course runs deep,
 our faith as true as a river through arid lands.

Yet the storms come.
Together, we shore up the dams.
 . . . Time flows.

Parenting, Part II

They played happily
 in the sun,
 in arid lands,
 in the marshes,
 guided by the forces
 of a river of faith

The expected storms came.
The dams burst,
 and we shored them back up again
 together,
 again
 and again

Water flows. . . time slows...
 together,

Where have the eager faces gone,
 so restless to please?
How did it become so hard
 to find reasons for praise?
When did they first shrink from the light,
 to peer blankly at nothingness?
The porous wall now holds fast,
 though the occupant founders;
the stained ceiling is refreshed,
 white and new,
 marked by the scent of new pigment.

And the rainbow was set in the cloud as a sign of the covenant
 never again will all be consumed by the flood

The Shredder

A sheet of paper is drawn into the shredder,
 another page torn from the draft
 of an unfinished manuscript.
I shake the accumulated detritus
 and view it with perplexity,
 turning it like a crystal in the light;
one more day
 in a week
 in a month
much like all the others.

Love and beauty,
 plan and purpose,
 transformed into shards
 of ink and pulp.
Children running
 on the beach,
 with happy faces,
 eager to learn;
squeaky-toys
 dropped at our feet,
 by mischievous pets;
cherished lives
 and nurtured hopes...
The sights and sounds
 of the wonderful-mundane,
 all accumulating day by day,
 blending with the harshness
 of care and resignation
 and overwhelming grief.

Yet still,
 some pages we keep.
We hide them away,
 a treasure to recover,
 if we but remember to look.

Sabbath Keeping

It was the evening after the heat wave,
in the summer following the attack.

A confusing day
after a hectic deadline;
A bittersweet day,
a lonely day,
for no apparent reason.

The little raft crept
across the still glass,
it's bow poking through the reeds
on the cloistered edges
of the marsh.

Distant voices and
distinctive birds
sang their chatters
and chirping scales
through the spaces
between dragonflies
and fish-splashes.

The treeline,
a twilit silhouette
was astonishingly ordinary.
June bugs were joined
by ratcheting Katydid,
as the night concert became electric.

The moon shone full.
Startled ducks resumed their flight
as the stars appeared.

The reeds,
quicken by an unseen breeze,
beckoned.
I watched
and listened.
I observed
what I knew.

This is the day which the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Goal of a Seeker

Delusion,
Confusion,
Illusion...
And as he experienced the flow
His rambling, mind-flowering consciousness
lurking behind the forever-now,
he knew that he must capture it
to become Real.

Morning Prayer

Lord, open our hearts and minds
to the strange and precious gift
you've given us this day.
Life is more than a book, with pages we can count,
more than a movie, that can be passively watched,
from beginning to end.

Lord, we thank you for the chance to struggle,
to cry, to laugh, and to grow.
Help us to bear the hard times, but even more,
strengthen us to accept the good times,
to seek out and enjoy the little treasures buried in each day.

Help us to love each other for what we are,
to make good choices about what we will become,
to use our gifts and our talents for a purpose greater than
ourselves.

Nourish the seeds of faith and confidence,
seeds sown over many years in many places,
that we can grow stronger from our experiences
both as individuals and as a family.

In the name of all that is Holy,
stay with us always, now and forever. Amen.