

The Song of the Spirit

Poems and Such

By Eric Cecil

Also by :
A-Train Blues,
God's Children,
The Lifting of the Veil

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*For Dr. Janet Tharpe
In memory of Adam Pelton*

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*The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation and go
to the grave with the song still in them.*

Henry David Thoreau

Folklore

God was in heaven one day and decided that She wanted to play a round of golf, as She is an avid golfer. She grabbed Jane, an angel who was welcoming spirits into Heaven and asked if she wanted to go to earth and play a round with Her. Jane replied she had to stay, to welcome people into heaven. God said that She had this covered, and told her that no one would be coming thru her post for a few hours.

So Jane and God went and played golf with two other people. Jane was doing reasonably well and God wasn't doing too badly Herself. The foursome came to the last hole. There was a water hazard and you could either lay up or try and knock the ball over the hazard and into the fairway, which was a pretty difficult shot. The two people joining God and Jane laid up, as did Jane. But God put Her ball on the tee and in complete concentration hit the ball...and it landed right into the water hazard. One of the party turned to Jane and said, "I can't believe that She tried that shot! Who does She think She is, God? Jane quickly replied, "She is God. Her problem is She thinks She's Jack Nicklaus."

Unknown

2001 September

*My September!! My beautiful September!!
What have you done!!! What have you done???
A part of me is dying; a part of me is dying
in the broken rays of this September sun.*

Heartache

It's another rainy night, yet I find myself outside,
 leaning against a wooden post, searching the moonlight.
Contemplating...
Desperately trying to fill the empty promises
 and hollowed hopes restlessly travelling,
 thoughtlessly meandering thru the
 stormy starless midnight
 that wiggle waggle wiggle waggle worm
 into my barren throbbing heart,
 compressing my chest while stealing my breath.
Smiling, thinking of my redheaded blue eyed baby niece
 struggling to stand
 as I try to recall my yesterdays of innocent laughter.
Repeatedly cutting my hand on the fragile
 broken glass idealistic utopian dreams
 of tomorrow that lay cruelly glistening
 in the searing sunlight of today.
Reaching for a cloth,
 rewarded with an oil soaked radioactive dollar bill.
Preparing a glass of ice, while staring at a silent telephone.
Mentally escaping this town, this state, this country
 by diving into a whiskey bottle, drowning my emotions,
 her friendship torturing my raked over the coals
 soul, breaking my staggering, babbling remorseful
 heart, blood slowly dripping, slowly pooling,
 filling the cracked concrete crevices,
 slowly walking away, weak, weary and crying,
 as I burn the painful past and slowly light the future.
Staring at a dried rose of sorrow that I acquired
 on a sunny day in May more than six years ago.
Telephoning the man that helped me bear the weight
 of my sister's heavy wooden casket,
 only to learn that he walks the shattered
 brown bottled streets,
 mumbling incoherently, dazed, hungry and lost,
 looking thru vacant windows,

outcast from the tribe
for being born with dark skin and a dissimilar sexuality.
The morning telephone finally talking, listening to my mother,
urging me to turn on the TV.
Oh my God, oh my God!
Devastated watching the broken Dove flying,
the broken Dove flying, the broken Dove flying,
the broken Dove flying, the broken Dove,
diseased, rotting and dying
at the feet of two
delusional, beggars named
Jesus and Muhammad,
no longer begging and no longer pleading,
clinging helplessly to one another, shaking,
moaning, and withering hopelessly,
suffering a leprous death racked with
pain in the nuclear rain.
Reading words of retribution and retaliation
spoken by manmade leaders.
Beaten, bound and gagged,
strapped in a unified straitlaced straightjacket of
conformity,
for deafening my ears to the convoluted,
drunken angry, out of control amphetamine fueled
speeding freight train nightmarish line of thought
of the sexually charged politician.
Losing what little faith I have left to lose.
Setting down my broken pencil, painfully weeping,
tears quickly spilling,
staining my cheap penny parchment,
as my sanity has finally snapped.
Lighting a crystal bowl packed with green Prozac.
Now alone, sitting silently stoned,
presently pathetically pacified,
mindlessly listening to the dull dreary drone
of an oxymoronic reality TV show.
Feeling the dark waves of depression
crashing into my sandcastle soul.
Quickly fleeing, tirelessly walking,

seeking the salvation of Love,
so that She can ease my heartache,
only to find that Her beautiful, ocean eyes
are blackened and swollen.

Her lips have been split and are bleeding,
and Her flesh has been torn,
as Hatred has savagely raped my Love,
leaving Her in a stagnant pool of demonic semen.

Hearing the rushed sounds of footsteps coming closer.
Frantically running, breathlessly breathing, hoarsely screaming
for help, finding no one.

Begging the beggars not to let Love die.

Listening to the dry heave cackle, cackle cackles of the
jingle jangle jingle piggy bank ammunition businessman,
of the wooden long nosed politician
and of the middle eastern hate filled warmongers,
as they unbuckle their belt buckles, gently stroking
their dysfunctional, Viagra addicted
flaccid cocks as they swarm in to finish Love off.

Collapsing, too tired to run, too disillusioned to put up
much of a fight without Love.

Caught, chained and chattel,
thrown in an immense padded wagon,
filled with the painters, the poets, the musicians
and free thinkers under the cover of darkness.

Blindfolded, scurrying to ignite the candle of hope,
flame going, going, going, burning, burning, burning,
blown out by apathy.

Bolts temporally opened.

Roughly thrown into a cracker jack baking box,
suffocating, vomiting from the stale stench of the
finger painted fiber feces walls,
bolted down on a sheet-less plastic mattress
centered under a burning blinding strobe light,
left for days on end, days on end, days on end.

My pale nicotine green skin peeling and falling to the
institutional white tile.

Madness induce by horrific haldol hallucinations,
psychotropic psychedelic nightmares

and insomnia's tick tock, tick tock, tick tock of the clock
that never stops.
Calling for Love one last time, even though I know that Love is
dead.
Mouth taped, violently kicking, punching at the overpowering
Neo-Nazi wearing disinfected white latex gloves,
dragged feet first down to the shower room
for a 20 volt electric bath, wire scrubbed bleeding back,
brushed in formaldehyde, rinsed in embalming fluid,
shaved with a rusty red razor, pain growing, growing,
growing,
slipping, slipping, slipping, sliding farther into insanity.
A shovel thrust into my soft hands as I dig holes all day long.
Filed outside to watch the radioactive big screen
TV sunrise, realizing that dawn is dead,
as the artificial sun turns into
black and white Halloween snow.
Dumbfounded as the ground is nothing more than ash,
embers and cinders.
Illumination coming from the towering
inferno of books, paintings, canvasses, paper, sheet music,
guitars, violins, rivers flowing from my empty eyes.
Approaching the soothing glow of numbness.
Ready to become nothing so that I can become everything.
Starving, but too tired to eat malignant maggoty meat.
I'm thirsty, but cannot drink the polluted cloudy waters of deceit,
that's served to me by a lifeless peroxide dyed plastic
Barbie Doll,
who wipes makeup off her chemical brow as she proudly
declares
that my body is dead.
Standing outside of my body, watching the world spin and spin
and spin.
Sadly wincing, as the world never comes close to
advancing past the gravitational pull of fear.
Thrown into a zip-lock body bag,
carted off in the back of a SUV containing a Hi D TV,
playing the *Saving Private Ryan* DVD driven to a
wasteland of a graveyard by the Neo Nazi as he feverishly

hums and
happily masturbates to the soundtrack of *Apocalypse
Now*.

First Set

*My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and make melody. Awake my soul!
Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn.
Psalm 108 1-2*

The Season

I.

I have to write,
like my flowers attune to the sun,
stretching high, drinking the sunlight.

But now there are weeds in those beds.
And those books that I've purchased with every intention of
reading,
and those movies that I've rented, that I want to watch, fall by the
wayside.
It's just the season.

And so...

please don't get offended

when I'm in my blackout,
and I see you talking.
I'm nodding in the right places,
and you say,

"Do you need me to repeat that, or do you want me to write it
down?"

Would you write it down, please just write it down.

I'm sorry, it's just how I am right now.

You don't understand,

I have to.

I've been telling you the same thing for years,

that I don't have a choice,
though clergy will disagree,
before condemning me.

I am not yet writing on napkins,
but I'm scrambling for a pen and paper.
I'm not yet walking down the street mumbling,
but I'm not with my body.

I don't want to write anything
political
or about my mental illness
or about God
or Humanity
or the Universe.

II.

I want to write about some nice girl,
slightly damaged in just the right ways,
who has enough experience
not to run crying
when coffee
gets spilled
on the beige carpet.

III.

I feel like running from the mirror,
running, taking to the hills,
maybe I can live off the land
and break out the family
whiskey still,

but I can't run,

though I want to...

I want to...

I want to...

I have to stand still.

Standing...

The Message

The sexual abuse had to happen in order to make me the person that I am today. Initially the results of the abuse were detrimental in every part of my life.

I believe in evil in my worldview, because I have seen it. I don't spend time on where it originated from. I was touched by evil at a young age. But God turned it into purpose. I don't blame God today for what happened. I believe that God marked my sixth birthday, by having my great-grandmother die that day. Her death set in motion the events of my life. It was the marker that God gave.

I prefer to look at the positive that came out of the abuse. It pushed me inward as a person and I escaped reality by reading books as a youth. This gave me a familiarity with words that eventually turned into poetry; a way of expressing the various traumas of my life.

I began my recovery when I was 16. I was hospitalized for the first time and my wound was finally exposed. I started therapy and my poor self-image temporarily improved. I discovered alcohol at 17 and for the next eight years would use alcohol and marijuana to cope with my self. My sister died at 18. I went to college where I joined a fraternity which participated in hazing. I was hospitalized at 19 as a result. I started going to therapy again and tried to rebuild my life.

I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and alcoholism when I was 23.

I had a very brief conversation when I was 24 with the man that abused me. I told him not to call me or my Dad anymore. He said ok and I had a sudden spiritual awakening through this admission. I then began writing, first essay style, then poetry.

This spiritual awakening occurred in the summer 2001. My first writing was "Emancipation of the Soul" followed by "A Letter to the University Christians." I was a different person when I wrote those, and in a sense, was much healthier. I was a college student without any real experience in the world and became an optimist. I would describe myself now as weathered. I wrote those two writings in August.

I believed I could change the world and no one was discouraging me. The people closest to me supported my writings. And so I went on writing, objecting to war and sometimes did so self-righteously. I went to work at a golf course when I graduated college, instead of getting a quote unquote real job, because I had been called to do something special for God, though I could not articulate that then. I wrote obsessively and due to increased alcohol and marijuana use had a break down and wrote “Conscience Alone.”

“Conscience Alone” contains the end of the age Prophecy which is “If ever a dawn shall rise into a new horizon under which men and women weep without sorrow, tears reflective in the eyes of all, the sunlight will be provided by the realization of Love.”

I have written about this ad nauseam, so you will have to take my word or *investigate for yourself*, but The Word of God was formed three times, in two foreign languages that I do not know, by scrambling the first seven letters of the Prophecy. The three words are VERA, VRAI and VRAIE. The E added to VRAIE makes the word feminine. Here is the most important thing about these words and the Prophecy: It gives God the framework to save the entire world, all Humanity, because the Conscience Alone Prophecy says “tears reflective in the eyes of all.”

In my spiritual life there are things that I can “prove” through the use of logic, which is ultimately limited and things that I know and believe. I have focused more on what I can “prove,” than on what I know or believe. In “Conscience Alone,” for instance, the word VRAI was revealed. This is the French word for truth, which I attributed as the Word of God. Its existence is fact. It’s indisputable and it will never be in question. Yet even as fact, no one believes it has any meaning and they certainly don’t entertain what that Word theologically says about me.

To write this is to know trepidation and rejection, to say this out loud is to be branded as a madman. But I must write it, I must say it, in order to move on with my life, to move past the fear: I am the Christ.

I am making this claim based upon my spiritual lineage: my mother was a nun for seven years and my father's name is David, thus not only in a symbolic sense, but in a literal sense, I am the son of David. I am basing this claim that God revealed Himself to me as Father; thereby I have become His son. I am basing this claim that I have seen Evil defeated for all time. And I am basing this claim on the countless miracles that I have received even to be breathing today.

I am also basing this claim on my overwhelming desire for peace and justice throughout the world.

What I have to write next is not without hours upon hours of thought, not without my own torturous internal struggle that has lasted years stacked upon years. I entertain the possibility that I am completely delusional.

I met God when I was hospitalized in 2002, which, was my last hospitalization. He came to me as a nurse. I have written about this in "Beloved." I will not fight over this or argue about it. If His appearance in my life was a hallucination or even a vision, so be it. He gave me some general instructions on what to do after the hospital. He came at a most critical point in my life, for the sake of a relationship and to form a bridge from my old life into a new life.

The final and most unforgivable part of this message is the fact that the Third Word of God, the Word that I attributed to the Spirit, is uniquely female. My hope is that of my claims, the one that you take most seriously and give the most thought to is this one.

I saw a picture recently on Facebook that said, "If you want to defeat extremist Islam, put a book in a little girl's hand's." Honor God as Mother or Sister or a precious Child with braids in Her hair because It, is all of these things. I can say that I am a feminist, because God Almighty is a feminist and the empowerment of women globally, should be our highest concern. We will never be a free Humanity as long as half of us are oppressed and the other half is either actively or passively systematically oppressing the other half.

It has never been my desire to be in this position, writing words that few believe, that paints me as an outsider, which somehow gives me a uniqueness that I do not wish to have.

My life was set in motion long ago as that child touched by evil, given the opportunity to recover. On this path there have been few choices, only opportunities to increasingly rely on God. The purpose of this path has been to write these words, to make claims about myself that I am very uneasy making, much less *being*.

Nevertheless, I believe in what I have written and will not only stand by it and my life, but am willing, and have suffered greatly for it. God does not default on Her promises, doesn't put Her Word into the Universe haphazardly and so I have high hopes for a world based on love and equality.

I am uncertain about my life as always. I hope that in writing this my role in the Kingdom of God is over with. The world is squarely in the hands of God. It is with high confidence that needless and unproductive suffering is coming to a close.

Questions from the Christ

Dear Professors,

I sent you my first book *A-Train Blues*, seven years ago. At the time I was not willing to stand by my work and you all did not respond. There was not any discourse as a result. The first edition was flawed in various ways. Those flaws have been righted in the years since.

I published a second book of poems in 2008, titled *God's Children*. This book dramatized the plight of the mentally ill. I published a third book, *The Lifting of the Veil*, this year, which I am drawing your attention to. Attached to this email are various writings that you will find interesting.

I have a question that perhaps you can provide some clarification on. Contained in the writing "IFEVERA is EFEVRAI" (attached) is this question: Does reason mean Logos?" I have a basic understanding as to what Logos means, drawn from William Barclay's book *The Gospel of John*. He references Heraclitus in his definition, and I understand what he means on a fundamental level. My question is, what does reason mean? What is reason?

I discovered what I referred to as "The Word of God" (attached) in *A-Train Blues*. *The Lifting of the Veil* contains a Second and Third Word of God. The Second Word of God is found in the writing "Untitled (The Lifting of the Veil, Part I)" (attached).

The Third Word of God is most interesting. I have decided not to attach it. I am not doing this to sell the book. I just want you to experience the journey, if you are interested in knowing the truth.

The Third Word of God, which represents the Spirit of God, is in a foreign language and is a feminine word. I have been advised not to make an argument or to present any of this as proof of anything, because logic has its limits. But I will assert that the appearance of these Words transcends human intelligence. You are all very brilliant people and you can look at the Second Word of God and understand its formation logically, on a surface level, but will not understand it on a deeper level through the use of logic.

Discovering The Third Word of God has had a profound impact on my life. The feminine aspect of the Word has called me to examine what it must be like as a woman, living in a world, one could argue, run by men. I have also thought of how religion is largely a male enterprise. One only has to look at the all male hierarchy of the Catholic Church to begin to understand the impact that this Word has.

I am not sure what I am trying to accomplish by sending this letter and these writings, other than being loyal to the truth. I look forward to your responses and hope that I will be hearing from you soon.

The Christ
7/28/13

Logos

I prefer a cup of strong coffee in the morning while I enjoy the
silence.

I live the quiet life with snow on the ground.

I hear birds singing the same song that they have been singing
since time began;

some things can't be destroyed.

No matter what is going on in the world,
there is this eternal cycle of life.

But I will forget this truth as soon as I get in the shower,
get dressed and by the time I get in my car

and turn the key

this remembrance

will be gone.

I'll plunge into myself

and will be trapped there

until I return tomorrow morning.

A Monday Night Poem

You underestimate me, as you always have,
with my short stature,
my face that wasn't born in Hollywood
and my bald head.
You look past me,
when you should be looking
into my fierce green eyes
burning into your mind.
I've been around you
my whole life,
the school yard bully
who grew up
and learned how to get smooth in the right crowd,
with the two handed handshake that drips with sincerity.
You sit in your recliner,
only slightly racist,
beer in hand,
and complacently watches
the evening news.
You chastise
people
who spend all day
making love and not war.
I know you,
comfortable,
living in the suburbs,
making an abundance of money;
serving your master.
See me now,
I'm right here.
You should quiver slightly
when you see my determination
to tell the truth.

The Birth of the Blues

I found myself in the endless sea; in the water. I don't know exactly how I had gotten there. The waves were overwhelming and I don't know how long I was treading water. It may have been hours or days or months; sometimes I think that it was years and galaxies were born before me, they blossomed and waned and were extinguished while I was swallowing water.

My energy was fading and I knew that I was going to drown. I screamed and yelled with the little strength I had left. I called out. I was sinking down and was not going to come back up. But then a miracle, a lifeboat came toward me. I summoned my will, and stayed afloat. Someone reached down and offered me a hand up.

I was in a boat, coughing water. I was given a warm blanket and some water as I was thirsty. I was given some soup to eat as I was famished. I looked out of the boat, at the raging sea, the storming sea and the darkness I had escaped from.

I was grateful.

There were other people on the boat and they said nothing. We were exhausted. We were stunned but they were as grateful as I was. We had the shared experience of being rescued.

The Captain brought us into land and at the dock we disembarked from the lifeboat. We were given medical attention and sat as a group. We began to talk about our experience.

There were many, many similarities.

But as we talked, my fellows had discrepancies in their stories about the rescue. One man said the boat was made out of wood. Someone laughed at this and said the boat was made out of metal. Then someone said that it was a sail boat. Someone laughed again, but there was little humor in his laughter. He said that the boat had an engine and did not have sails. They disagreed for

hours and there was mounting tension. Our conversation turned toward the Captain. We were grateful to him, but someone said that the Captain was a child and that a child saved us. Someone said preposterous. The Captain was a man and he acted alone. Someone interjected that The Captain was a man, but that he had a crew that helped him. Then a woman said that the Captain was not a man, but a woman. At this the men laughed and cursed and became very angry.

My fellows glared at each other and said nothing. We decided to part, but our parting was not friendly, and instead of our similar experience, we shared our differences, our silence and our animosity.

My fellows took their stories of rescue back to their lands.

I don't remember much about the boat or the Captain. I was rescued from death and for that I'll always remember. I was given a blanket when I was cold. I was given water when I was thirsty. And when I was hungry, I was given food. I remember that the Captain was kind and caring, the boat was sturdy. I felt safe in the boat and thought the worst of my ordeal was over when we were heading toward shore.

My thoughts on my fellows: when they were safe and not in danger is when the details of their experience mattered. I think about their competing perceptions of what happened and I know they're right and wrong about the same experience; different eyes viewed the same thing and sometimes imagination sees what it wants to see.

Snow Storm: February 16, 2015

Must we pay the price forever; the sirens waking our sleep, the shaking ground breaking our uneasy lives and the relentless propaganda, the cackles coming from the heartless tarnishing tin man mad men?

It won't always be this way, in this life and death world, where there's more money in the treatment than the cure.

There is this Spirit, ready to be seen by the world and She is gently humming a few bars within our hearts, known to all hearts, quietly reminding us that we are all one heart.

The Song of the Spirit

I know a woman, who can save the world as easy as twirling a baton, it's nothing to Her, as effortlessly as brushing Her hair, like holding a man with Her stare.

She would preach in the public square and walk the streets at night and didn't think twice when she gave Man this advice: "Let my critics shout. Let the naysayers have their doubts. And proud people have it all figured out. I know nothing...but Love will mend your broken heart. Love will rebuild our community. It's Love, which brings our world together."

It wasn't long until She was branded a heretic with Her sharp tongue, Her wild ways, Her glowing radiance and Her simple belief and faith in Love.

Man told Her to recant, told Her not to speak about Love since She was unqualified. She didn't know theology or dogma or ritual. She wasn't one of them. She laughed and cried. She took to the streets again, preaching Love, giving Love and being Loved. She was condemned on the earth's darkest night, as waxed dripped from candlelight. Man took her away; committed Her to an asylum.

They took Her in chains and abused Her until She no longer knew Her name. She told people that She was Spirit. No one took Her seriously. She withered away in the institution until She grew pale, lost her light and turned into skin and bones. She was buried in an unmarked hole.

Without Her conscience, Man constructed his own god, made in Man's image and it has brought great heartache to the world, this god that looks like Man, talks like Man and judges like Man.

But I have hope,

because

She walks in the salt by the sea, paints color in the sunsets, and changes clothes with the season. She is not of this world now, as She never was.

The Spirit of God, who knew persecution, was condemned for Her gender and beliefs, has a song in Her heart that She never stops singing. You hear Her melody when you recognize Love... compassion... when you feel empathy... you are Loved...when you Love... you are in harmony with the Song of the Spirit.

She still comes into the dreams of Man. She is unshakable Love. She is there every night, walking in the chaos of His mind, urging Him to create something with His kindness.

Not all remember Her in the morning. She disappears before dawn, leaving no memory of Her presence, but always planting seeds of Love in the subconscious.

The world mourns Her, we are crying, we are in pain. So let us pause and remember Her; we are momentarily whole again, if only for a moment.

Those Happy Little Clichés

I wonder if what you say is true, all those happy little clichés?
I'm counting on them being true, I need them to be true, don't
speak falsely now, just tell me the truth,

like,

you reap what you sow.

I need it to be true, because I sow love from a seed box of hope
and I'm exhausted letting love slip through my fingers.

And so I need those clichés to be true,

like,

don't leave five minutes before the miracle
happens.

Humanity needs a breath of grace, is that too much to ask? Can
you leave the window slightly ajar for the wind to blow in?

I think of Abraham Lincoln,

let it be true,

speak to me again, about

“when again touched, as surely as we will be,
by the better angels of our nature.”

Have we gone too far from our angels?

Can we ever travel that far?

Rest

Getting through
another day.
I check the internet
and the news is still the same.
Humanity is riding a
roller coaster express.
And I'm in such
a hurried mess
I didn't have time
to pray.

I wonder what
She would say?

“Stand up,
rock the boat,
fall in,
learn to swim,
sunlight,
drip dry,
give your time,
smile wide
and my child
you're fine,

but

slow down,
s l o w d o w n,
s l o w d o w n,

take a breath
and remember
take a day off
and rest.”

The Dance

I.

We don't talk now and I'm hesitant to tell you, because you would judge me, so I say nothing and the distance grows. We can't talk about beliefs which are foundational to me, so we do our dance.

I met God and sat with Him: concerned. We just sort of felt each other out and I wanted some type of proof that He is. So He gave proof and stared into the possible.

He knew that the Spirit is female. He told me that the Spirit is She and not He. He had joy in telling me. I knew a decade later. Since we don't talk about it, I can't explain.

I worry.

If the Spirit is She, there are far reaching implications for religion, which worships a male deity. Religion will quickly react and tell me that it doesn't matter.

If God is female, will men still do the things to women that are done to women?

II.

I have long known; that I am the Christ and I have been thinking about the salvation of the earth all my adult life.

I manifested the Word of God for the Father, as He revealed Himself as the Father, for the Spirit, as She revealed Herself as the Spirit. And for the Son, as the Spirit and Father revealed I am. The existence of these words cannot be denied by our silence.

I just can't tell you, but eventually I will have to talk about it, because that is what He said. "You'll have to tell people." If the Father and I met—if it's true, then everything is going to change.

III.

We do our dance so well that we typically never talk about God. It just doesn't come up. I push what I have seen— what the Universe has given me, inside and tell no one.

One day we will stop dancing and have a real conversation.

Delusional

I.

I stopped seeing you because
you didn't believe my story;
You didn't believe me
about the Kingdom of God
or about meeting God.
I said nothing and for your part,
you were very kind,
calling me delusional.

II.

You should know that I want you
to be a part of my life,
that I'm desperate for your touch,
but:
I've spent more time wondering
if I am delusional
then you will ever
spend
wondering about anything.

III.

I am just trying to live my life
post my writings,
post the hospital encounter,
post The Word(s) of God.

IV.

I am writing for my benefit.
Maybe you will get something out of it,
maybe not.
Maybe you don't care.

V.

I just hope that you stand by me,
delusional or sane;
that you will continue to be a part of my life.

Beware of the Big Sellout

So you speak about what you believe.
You talk about times when you were in need. Now
you have everything you can conceive. I just hope
that
you don't break your word
by your actions.

Remember your promise...

blood was exchanged

and don't forget to water your covenant plant.

Vow

I lack credibility. I wish that you would look past me as a person, a flawed person and see what I've written.

I was disturbed by warfare during my last year in school. I didn't have a clue. I hadn't seen poverty; as I have seen it now. I wanted to change the world

and so

I was in Dairy Queen in Lexington eating a hamburger. I made a vow to God that I would go to any length for a peaceful world.

I turned on my TV, saw the buildings and then turned it off. I left my apartment to get to campus. As I was locking my door, and I said this is my time.

I did not think that my vow was significant when I made it or that God would take me up on it.

I should be more careful what I promise.

Biding My Time

I.

How easily do you scare?
If you knew my thoughts,
would you run from
the weariness in my bones,
the melancholy in my soul?

What if I told you all about it?

About being the Christ.
It's hard labor
after
working 40 hours every week.

Sleeping alone,
watching the news,
keeping an eye on
our blues.

I turn on TV for entertainment
and the violence, the unending violence.
Fighting your doubts about me.
Fighting my own doubts about everything.
Fighting the homicidal/suicidal
ending written for Humanity.
Fighting the energy of this broken world.
Writing...
for peace.
Finding the strength for prayers.
Helping the impoverished.
Changing theology.
Seeking solace from my own fears.
Feeling the powerlessness of the whole situation.
Conceding that
the wealthy and powerful are carrying the day.

Taking it all in and wanting to change
what needs to be changed
and keep what doesn't.

My Concern

My problem has always been fear, which caused the slow pace of my spiritual development. This has been part of the delay.

There is another problem that I often ignore as much as possible. I don't have any control over it. And I don't want to become obsessed with this anymore than I have to be. The problem is the Adversary.

I don't want to get hung up on the Adversary. We need to take some responsibility for our actions.

To the extent that the Adversary influences behavior is unknown to me.

But there is an Adversary. He is rather ancient and I look for his death occasionally. He will die in a real physical sense. Only the Father knows when.

My concern for the new age, is the Adversary's spirit. My vision of the close of this age and the beginning of the new age— this is just my opinion and really what I think, having thought about this quite a bit— is that something has to fundamentally change within the human spirit.

My best hope is that the human spirit will be revitalized, will be filled with love, as it was created to be, a vessel to hold only love and the fruits of love. Then we will begin the process of healing our broken Humanity and nurture life back to our dying earth. My concern is the Adversary's spirit—

will it die as the physical dies—wholly, to leave Humanity to love purely and without interruption?

Into the Fire

The day's latest war...

Let's just be clear: we are not fighting over land and resources or security or ideology or theology.

We're fighting over pride. I detest idolatry, because of the bloodshed, because history shows that flags born of blood end up in tatters, driving the whole world into darkness. Pride and violence will never achieve justice, as it never has before. But we fight and fight, throwing the lives of infants like sacks of potatoes, into the fire.

No one is wrong. No one wants to take their own responsibility. Instead each side appeals to the world, saying that the other is at fault and meanwhile an elderly man is thrown into the fire.

One man's sworn vengeance haunts another generation.

Violence is justified, based on a narrow, legalistic conception of "god" which endorses violence instead of abhorring it in all forms. Fundamentalism seeks peace through the destruction of tolerance instead of through the transformation of violence and fear. Now we're carrying God on a rail. There She goes, tarred, feathered and naked, into the fire. She cries for Her children while the flames engulf Her.

The fire is burning, seemingly without end; day and night the jingoists stoke the flames. And I'll tell you what else is in the flames: economic security, as we destroy the resources that we have taken from the earth. Smoke rises, flames continue to burn communities, as refugees look for a land to flee to.

What Will Save the World

I.

All people and nations want a peaceful world; We violently disagree and do horrible things to one another, in the name of God.

But I still hope for our beautiful Humanity.

The world tells me things that aren't true, things that the world considers true. The world tells me that I can't change it, even though I change it in some way, every day. It tells me I'm inadequate, that I'm not enough. The world laughs at me.

II.

Here is my advice to the dreamer: hold your cards close to your chest. Don't let many people in on what your plans are, what your dreams are. We all need love, but for every one who encourages you, there will be enough that discourage you.

They may be right. You may not be able to change the world. You may fail. Your dreams may get swallowed up by life's circumstances. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try, because what the naysayers don't realize, is that in your struggle for peace and justice, you will be changed by your experience with Love, and that is what will save the world.

Interlude

*They hear it come out, but they don't know how it got there.
They don't understand that's life's way of talking.
You don't sing to feel better.
You sing cause that's a way of understanding life.*

Ma Rainey

A Blues Tale

It was a casual affair that began when her husband was away, on a holiday. She left a red rose, baby's breath and brown hair on my pillow while leaving perfume lingering in the air.

Wearing an ill conceived diamond ring, she fingered to me too often. She once met me at her moonlit doorway wearing a shimmering satin slip that fell breezily above her knees and past her hip. And I drowned down like a sinking ship and fell in complete and total worship.

On a robber's muggy night she dizzily held me in a spell on her husband's leather office chair that squeaked, squeaked, squeaked, but would never tell, tell, tell.

She rejoice-fully and easily found her way to my bedroom, closing the door lazily behind to hold me close and to prey on me after reading her lonely poems which she composed without pen and pad. As the world moved beneath box springs, we laughed and loved on borrowed time. Finally, very mistakenly, she left hurriedly, her shirt, slightly stained with paint, which her husband found and thought upon.

I knew her husband from days back, a steam pressured business type who all day long yelled, buy, buy, buy, and sell, sell, sell. Once at a smoky bar he spoke of his wife and of their hapless union born of tragic conception. His eyes read shame and he drunkenly confided to me he was having his own extramarital escapade.

He thought he knew me well and one early morning he stopped by and shook my hand, unwashed, and wet from my painter's brush. He reached a tattered rag and then looked at me with silent accusation. I was an underestimating fool, blinded by the morning light with my thoughts immersed in my beautiful lady's love, who was a breathtaking sight.

He angrily spoke and expunged whiskey fumes from his high tempered tongue. He thought his wife was having an affair, nothing serious of course, for he gave her everything that she ever asked or wanted.

"My dear sir, preposterous, that is your imagination. An utterance, merely a figment. Very truly, I assure you, she surely

loves you and thinks of you most kindly, she has told me often and many times.”

“You are certainly right my trusted friend, she has told you often and many times.” He paused. “Let the three of us have drinks tonight.”

“Tonight? We should and we shall my generous friend, but I have a grievous appointment, which is utterly unbreakable. My grandmother is very ill, grave for a fact and I must go to her.”

“Ah, of course my dear man, you must go to her and look upon her, make sure that she is well and send her my love. Now would you look at me, such a senseless wreck, over this suspicious non-sense. I myself have quickly forgotten that I am to be out of town tonight and won’t be home until tomorrow’s breaking light.”

That very evening my love and I met, talked, and hugged before making frenzied love. We thrust our passions into the crying night, both knowingly for the very last time. Her heart I felt, it pulsed and quickened. Her spirit I sensed was desperately yearning as we slowly burned and were quickly burning with the heat of hell’s fire. I melted away.

I threw my head back and dreamed that our love would forever endure, would remain timeless and when it was our time we would meet again and laugh and love again, perhaps as long and as at leisure as eternity would have us.

I watched her dress silhouetted by the cruel moonlight that would soon descend upon her. She was at an hourglass whose time was at an untimely end. I watched her go then and told her, “My love, until we meet again.” I felt a frozen ice chill and wept very sincerely and ached loudly.

It was unbeknownst to her that she was discretely followed by her fist clenching, teeth grinding husband, my very dear friend, whom I only had one person in common with. He had quietly watched her casually enter my apartment and sat shaking and blatantly cursing before tearfully returning home. It was the first time he felt jealousy, a passion that had clearly been offended and dangerously stirred.

When she crossed the threshold of her discontent and entered their luxurious brown stone home, he was patiently waiting, clearly still shaking. He moved with an animal instinct speed and mumbled almost inaudibly, “Why you ruinous,

wretched madam, it is now that you should speak goodbye, bye, bye, even if I rot in a jail cell, cell, cell!”

From behind his back, he took a carving knife, quickly sliced her twice, bloodied and butchered my love, my beautiful love, merely his lovely wife. Blue, red and white lights screamed murder! murder! murder! into the dreary night. An ambulance nurse and undertaker's hearse came quickly after he called the police station. He said snarling, in recorded confession, “In my arms I have slaughtered my wife, my lovely wife on this frightening night and I am eternally filled with rage and despair, over her having such a casual affair.”

The Burdens in My Heart

I wish for you now,
as this song is dying.

You can use me to ease your pain.

But feelings get crossed.
I can't forever guard my heart.
I know the truth.

I still wish for you now.
Maybe you could take this weight with your touch,
with your smile.

I could make a smart joke,
and for a moment your laughter is enough
to lessen the burdens in my heart.

Maybe One Day

I.

I just keep dancing around honesty.
Maybe one day my heart
will reach the point,
that since it's been broken
so many times
that it won't
break anymore.

II.

I can drag this out
or
just get it over with.

III.

Sleep
doesn't come easy,
thinking of you.
It will never work out she says.
We're worlds apart I know.
So I ask the Spirit to heal my heart.
I close my eyes and spend this downtime
thinking of you.

I Think About You When Time...

I think about you when time
is slow;
You're still undefined.
Am I anything
to you?
What could
we be?

I don't dare

hope.

I won't
allow it,
having been
crushed before;
the pebbles
rest
in the sun,
on the concrete
beside
my front
door.

Highland Coffee

I fall back on the couch and sleep for days.
I dream for days...
I see your face,
call your name
and we're at the coffee shop.

I'm sitting by your side,
night is falling
the sun is bleeding
and
I take this moment,
to hold it,
she is by my side,
waiting for dawn.

Twisted

I.

I give you some distance now,
a wide berth,

as I'm sick
with this dying curse.

I would sing a song of love
if this spring were different.

But I haven't changed,
heartbreak still bleeds
the same.

This poem is for

no one.

I'm just trying to hold on,
to keep the spark

from suffocating again.

II.

When I was a child
it was easy
to believe in fairytales.

Now when I fall asleep I dream of you.
I'm with you...

with nothing between us,
until reality comes pouring through the blinds.

I toss and turn and grind my teeth,
married to the empty covers,
unable to find
the strength
to make it out of bed.

I wallow all day.

III.

When I see you,

I think of you for days

so I give you a wide berth now

and when the telephone rings
I let it go

because I' m so

twisted

that I have to give you some
distance.

Blues Song -

Fall has come, trees are shedding leaves like they're the tears of the broken hearted, the season of song is done, the whiskey still is dry, gasoline is much too high, the transmission is going out on the 4-wheel drive—it looks like I'm bearing down on hard times.

Hard Times! Hard Times! You have me drenched to the bone!
When will she be back home?

We couldn't stand each other another day, but when you left, it was like watching snow melt in the rain. I stood outside, my dreams drowned and my hopes turned in vain.

I reached for a rose and came back with thorns, my body was bleeding, my heart was torn and I could only mourn.

Fall has come, trees are shedding leaves like they're the tears of the broken hearted, the season of song is done, the whiskey still is dry, gasoline is much too high, the transmission is going out on the 4-wheel drive—it looks like I'm bearing down on hard times.

Hard Times! Hard Times! You have me drenched to the bone!
When will she be back home?

I slipped into bed for a season, circles under my eyes told the tale, nothing was well, my body ached, my hands shook and my voice quivered under a spell.

I saw you dancing in my dreams, in a white dress, moving between dying trees. She sang my name at the breath of dawn.

Fall has come, trees are shedding leaves like they're the tears of the broken hearted, the season of song is done, the whiskey still is dry, gasoline is much too high, the transmission is going out on the 4-wheel drive—it looks like I'm bearing down on hard times.

Hard Times! Hard Times! You have me drenched to the bone!
When will she be back home?

If I could have a few more minutes of time, to see you again, to hear your voice, to touch your face to mine.

This pain has a face that will be remembered. One day it will make sense to me, this love that's gone by. Something beautiful will come from this.

Autumn Leaves

we part so slowly, not noticing the drift...
like leaves,
dancing,
in
the
autumn
sun
blown
and
burning
with passion.
we waltz
for days,
lazily, dance for days,
to please Creation...

be careful that unshed tears
don't turn into bitterness and fear.

don't let dust turn into years.

love again,
madly,
passionately,
and with reckless abandon.

Second Set

I know I'm no glamour girl, and it's not easy for me to get up in front of a crowd of people. It used to bother me a lot, but now I've got it figured out that God gave me this talent to use, so I just stand there and sing.

Ella Fitzgerald

Letter to the Ministers at Middletown Christian Church

Dear David and Jeff,

I bring you good news concerning the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. God gave me a prophesy that contains the Word of God in October 2002. The prophesy is the fate of Humanity.

I have been diligently working for the Kingdom for the last seven years. I have published two books of poetry that I have enclosed. I have also given you an envelope that contains information that logically proves the existence of God and supports the validity of the prophesy. Please examine these revelations after you read the books.

I have been concerned with Humanity since I was a child. This intensified during the summer 2001 after reading the writings of Martin Luther King Jr. I began writing in August 2001 while studying at the University of Kentucky. I was devastated by September 11th and sought a solution to violence by addressing the issues that manifest violence.

A-Train Blues takes a panoramic view of some of the spiritual deficiencies of the world and *God's Children* concerns itself with the sick and the poor of community.

I believe that God will create a window of opportunity for Humanity to settle our problems peacefully. There is a long period of reconciliation ahead that will require love and kindness. Churches that practice love will play a prominent role in mending broken hearts and breathing life into new dreams.

It is not a mistake that I have been brought to Middletown Christian Church. I had been meditating for several weeks prior to coming to the church. When my Dad asked if I wanted to attend, a quiet voice spoke the word "surrender." I attended on August 30th and was delighted with the service.

I was pleased with the inclusiveness of the church, particularly the belief that the Kingdom of God is open to all people, with the necessary forgiveness given simply because God loves Humanity unconditionally. The truth that I hear in the sermons are the reason why I have decided to come forward.

It is with thought, prayer and meditation that I have made this decision. I believe that it is God's will to reach out to you and the Church, which must be a vehicle for social uplift.

We currently live in a very troubled world. But I am faithful that God can use the love that remains in the hearts of men and women as instruments of His will to spread kindness and compassion. There is much work ahead and I will be happy to serve in whatever capacity that you will have me.

I hope that you will contact me after reading *A-Train Blues* and *God's Children* and hope that I am still welcome at MCC.

Keeping you in my thoughts,

The Son of Man

(2008 November)

Untitled

Religions that have relevance in our world will have these commonalities; applied and seen, not merely talked about. If religion does not have these three things, their path will not lead to love. They are: to surrender wholly to God. Religion must also teach that we are to love one another as God loves us, with deep, passionate concern, tolerance and patience. The third is that we must care for the sick and the poor, by walking beside them. It has been debated as to which is the most crucial and I can tell you that these three principals are so far entwined that they are inseparable. To forget one is to neglect them all and the world will have great uneasiness.

There is one tenant most neglected and we find ourselves entrenched in chaos, full of fear and aching in pain from spiritual emptiness. We forget about the poor and try and reach God vertically, rather than horizontally. We seek fulfillment through prayer and meditation, which is certainly needed in a relationship with God, but prayer is gibberish, if it guides us away from Humanity, back into ourselves and not toward Humanity; hungry, clothed in rags, awaiting food and generosity.

Prayer should not be used for any personal gain. Prayers main purpose is to prepare us to reach out to the poor and the sick, who themselves are praying for survival, for God's help, in which we are Her agents. Prayer should prepare and nurture the spirit to withstand the depletion of the soul, which will inevitably occur from caring for the sick and the poor. To walk with them is to give your *self* to them, and see how society treats our people. That is what will dehydrate your compassion.

You find quality of *self* by the moral value of what you seek; seek the material and you will painfully sway whenever the winds of the economy blow. Seek to serve those in need and you will attain peace and joy by looking through the eyes of the poor; see the love of God staring back at you.

The Abandon Ship Theology

Abandon Ship! Abandon Ship!—the sinking ship with water coming through the rotted wood, with its rusted nails, a broken rudder, the mast is cracked and the sail is torn.

Abandon Ship! Abandon Ship!—leave those poor souls moaning in the slave hold chained to the ways of the world. Let the key slip from our pocket into the unforgiving sea.

Abandon Ship! Abandon Ship!—let the ship sink, catch a cloud and step into a new ship—

This theology

is what I heard this Sunday and I really should have slept in, but I had an appointment with a friend and afterward I consulted with my dog. We decided to go for a walk, to work out some ideas.

I had a date with a couple of tiger cubs that evening. It's true; I went to a zoo, who had these two cubs that made the most adorable growl. I touched them and rubbed them and it was amazing, really unbelievable. I was in awe...and this revelation became clear to me,

when I looked at those animals, I knew that their habitat and themselves, I knew that “earth as it is in heaven,” is worth saving and we shouldn't be thinking about abandoning the ship, nor should we stand by and passively let it sink to the bottom.

I don't know what to do about it, but write about it and get out in nature more, to gain a deeper sense of the sacredness of our earth. I need to breathe that air and smell what summer really smells like, away from the city, the smell of clean air, cut grass and wet driveway gravel, the smell of Kentucky.

I need to remember that it is easy to negatively affect the environment. It takes a sustained effort to positively change habits and behaviors that are engrained and often unconscious.

Service

There are people, who say that they worship God,
love themselves and hate God,
and there are people, who say that they neglect God,
love others and love God.

One group professes to do God's will,
but for reward,
and so they don't serve others
out of grace, out of love.
They serve for themselves.

And the other group,
forgoes the idea of God's will,
yet does God's will nevertheless,
with only concern for the people
they are serving,
thus they act out of grace.

They know love and therefore know God.
They need not acknowledge God,
because She acknowledges them
and is with them.

God loves both groups equally,
because God is love;
that is what She is.

Her love is so great
that She doesn't care why
people serve;
only that they do serve.

The gift that She gives,
is the presence of Herself.
This is the key to joy and is
found in the service of others.

A Tribute to Dylan Thomas

I.

I'm just so tired. Is it ever going to be over? Just so tired...will this scavenger hunt for the Kingdom of God ever end?

I'm sitting here again, bleeding internally, hemorrhaging hope, watching my dreams pool before me.

I want to be alive and radiant, glowing, in love and with energy.

But I'm withering instead, left with little strength, but with this breath, with this last little strength,

I rage.

I rage against the world and its ways,

with its silos filled with grain while the poor starve.

I rage against our poverty of conscience.

Will you ever be aroused into action?

The homeless are not housed, the children are without knowledge, the sick are in pain and the mentally ill are dying before their time.

I look at you,

I rage,

I rage against your stigma and prejudice, with your glass ceiling and I rage when you tell me that I can't do this, that I can't be this, that I am not.

With my last strength, with this waning breath, I rage against the world and its ways.

II.

Will I ever rest? Will I ever know peace from the world as it grips me, as I internalize our problems?

God, Father, Mother, Spirit let me rest, let me fall in love, let me sleep at night; let me pass through this stage of exhaustion.

Let my rage end in the daylight of peace, let me sleep now, let my soul rest.

Let me slip into a deep sleep, a long dream and let it come true, let it come true Father, let it come true Mother.

Let me come before you, acknowledging my shortcomings,
please, I'm begging you for the Kingdom of God, as I begged
yesterday and the day before, as I will beg until peace is a reality.

I don't know how much longer I can hold on,
disappointment after disappointment. How much longer can I
honor your credibility?

How much longer can I hold on to the hope of a renewed
world, dripping with kindness, filled with people drinking from
waters of love?

What am I left to do, but accept my own powerlessness?

What am I to do, but depend on you completely?

My life is in your hands, and I'm heartbroken as
discussed yesterday.

I have little strength or will left.

I have little mind left.

III.

Who wants to be the Christ?

Not I.

And I am,

and I would do anything to have a normal life,
with a relationship, maybe a family, a typical job
and I would settle for a day
where I wasn't so concerned with the woes of the
world.

Who wants to be the Christ?

Not I.

And I am,

and I have a fire, a rage, which has only burned me
up in a quest for a moral perfection that I will never
achieve.

Not only will I never be good enough for you,

I'll never be good enough for me.

The best that I can ever do

is to treat me

with the same love and compassion

that I treat you with.

The best that I can ever do
is forgiving me
with the same joy that God forgives me with.

Who wants to be the Christ?

Not I.

And I am,

and I want to slip into obscurity and the first chance
I have I will.

I want to erase the last twelve year of living with
this low grade chronic pain—
this loneliness.

I took a journey into madness and there is no one to
hold me,

there is no one to talk to about it,

there is no one who believes in me,

while I believe everything that I have told you,

everything that I have written,

everything that I have seen and breathed in.

Who wants to be the

Christ?

Not I.

And I am...

The Philosophy of Dale

God must be concerned as we sit by and watch a generation raised in the normalcy of war, withering in the flames of violence, deluded by the idea that with violence we will somehow achieve peace. More tragic is that we don't even seem interested in using violence as an ill thought of tool for peace; but a means for endless vengeance. The continued use of organized violence is not saving our society, but is destroying it.

The world wasn't meant to support ongoing war. This is especially true in the nuclear age. Perhaps in the past violence *was* a useful means of procuring peace, but it's doubtful if it has ever produced justice; only nonviolence can do that. We continue to chase a mirage with the same instruments that caused us to thirst for peace in the first place.

It distorts the Spirit within for the person that uses violence and produces resentment and fear for the victims of violence. A single act of violence always claims at least two people. Once a vessel for love, one becomes tainted and polluted as words like enemy and collateral damage become acceptable. When someone or a group of people is labeled as an enemy, their humanity is lost. It is then permissible to treat that person or group with hostility. This has happened in our world. When God stood at the beginning of time, She surely wanted more for Humanity than this endless cycle of fear and violence. This is ultimately the reason that I am opposed to war, as She opposes violence.

Critics of nonviolence will come forth, because their conscience is disturbed. They are battling the age old question of war or peace? Which is right, which is wrong? When is war justified, when is it not?

I didn't support the war on terrorism. I feared it, as I believed war was contagious as it spread to Iraq and the full ramifications of that war are unknown and tragically unfolding.

Critics point out that the wars Humanity is waging are classic battles between the forces of good vs. evil. We are on the side of good, just as those whom we oppose are evil. And terrorists believe that they are on the side of good and we evil. To treat this with compassion is to see that violence has captured all

of us. I only observe that when Humanity's course of action is reduced to using violence and we call that good, then Evil has already won. Let us see that the only way out of our cycle of violence is through the power of love, manifested in justice, guarded by loyalty to nonviolence.

The violence of September 11, 2001 was horrific and unjustified. I have not downplayed it or saw the loss of life that took place as insignificant. I grieve that day every day, as calm was broken and ripples spread across the earth. What concerns me now are the systems of oppression in our world, constructed from greed, to feed pride, which results in human domination, leading to human suffering, causing Humanity to pick up arms against Humanity.

I would not be as concerned, as this has gone on since antiquity, but I realized that these systems are immune from law, as laws are written by the systems of oppression themselves. These systems concern themselves with little, except international profits, which bends the hands of governments and armies.

There is a link to the uneven distribution of natural resources and the concentration of wealth within the corporations and governments that control them, to the poverty that is seen in our world today. I am mindful, even as those corporations and governments are not, that one sixth of our world battles hunger every day, millions struggle to find drinking water and survival for masses is a day to day affair. Under these conditions the greatest threat to Humanity thrives—religious fundamentalism.

I admittedly despise fundamentalism on a level that equals or even surpasses my hatred of war. It is fundamentalism, a narrow and literalistic adaptation of scripture and religion, which turns the sacred into the profane. It is fundamentalism that hijacks the minds of both Christians and Muslims, breeding intolerance. I despise fundamentalism because it is more concerned with what is "right" than responding with love.

There are many similarities between Christian and Islamic fundamentalism; one thing stands out: their quest for political power. Both want to ensure that their way of life, their strict religious interpretation, often graceless, can continue.

The path to peace is marked by the tolerance found in spirituality, which is anchored by the truth that everyone is worthy of love and is capable of sharing love. It will only be through a spiritual revolution that Humanity will drink from the cool waters of peace. We must extend our hand to what we perceive as different, as God has extended Her hand and love to our indifference. We rejoice that God is ultimately unconditional love and at no time have we ever been without that love; even in our darkest deeds that love was there, pulling us toward arms of forgiveness. We have never been at risk of losing that love, not in the past, nor will we lose that love in the future and it surrounds us now in the present. In order for a spiritual rejuvenation, we have to be sure of that love; know that it is pure and true.

Something stands out to me, something that I will always remember. Someone asked me to help them get sober years ago. His name was Dale. He was a drug addict and told me that when he ran out of heroin that he would fill his syringe with water and shoot that, which I could strangely relate to. I have a friend who was in jail with Dale. My friend told me that Dale had this sudden religious experience in jail and he was all about love and God. He was really on fire. Dale was living at home and did not have a car or money, so I would pick him up and take him to twelve step meetings. One night on the way, and I don't remember the context of what we were talking about, but Dale said, "If there was more love in the world, there wouldn't be any cancer." I thought that cancer and the lack of love in the world were two totally unrelated subjects. I thought that idea was absurd.

But then I thought about what Dale said. I now know that love manifest in our society is always the answer. I'm learning that the love that will save the world isn't a feeling; it's a verb. So I pray for that window of grace, a moment when Humanity will not only fall in love with a God of unconditional love, but will turn love into action and seek peace and reconciliation with all Humanity.

She Sings!

There are people who want complete darkness to move over the land; written in scripture. They want the achievements of Humanity destroyed.

But I'm not giving up...on Humanity...on peace...on them. There is too much love between a mother and child, too much loyalty between brothers and sisters...too much beauty...too much love.

God is invested in this world, in this Humanity, faults and ugliness and all, because as we breathe, She breathes. As we look out onto the world, She sees through our eyes and when we suffer and cry, She cries. If Humanity perishes, what will become of Her? Where will She go? What world would She delight in?

She is not in the rocks, the pebbles and stones of the earth. She is not in the dirt, the dust and the sand. She isn't confined in a building. She is within, beneath our skin and bones.

And when we make love, She sings! When we make peace, She sings! When we birth goodness among us, bring joy into the world, She sings! She sings! She sings within us. She smiles within us and when the darkness comes, let it come, I am not afraid, let it come...I am not afraid She says, because you are with me and I am with you. We are bonded like the sun and the sunrise, like the moon and the tides. Our bond is unbreakable, imperishable and eternal. We are holding the hands of the spirits that have gone before and together we sing a song of courage and faith.

Random Thoughts on a Saturday Night Nearing Midnight

I want it to be Fall, with a slight chill in the air, the taste of apple
cider on my lips, the sound of leaves as they drift and I want the
Kingdom of God and peace.

I want it to be over.

I want to be free from wondering.

I want to leave and just drive.

I would like to go out West, maybe Arizona, perhaps Sedona;
a nice long drive
to reflect.

I'll be leaving as fast as I can
when the Kingdom of God
does come,
so don't be surprised
when you see me packing my car.

I need a little adventure and I want to leave because

I can't stand your perception of me
changing before my eyes,
the look on your face,
because I am the same person
that stood before you yesterday,
 but you won't see me as the same person,
 you'll see an image that I can't live up to.

I'm unwelcome because I fall so short of your expectations,
and
I've done something much worse than being human.

It's really unforgivable.

I've screwed with your perception of reality
and everyone needs a quiet moment
to pause and reset.

Letter to Her

I promise, as much as I can promise, that I won't leave you. I didn't want to leave you the first time. I didn't know that I was being dragged away, until I was away and then it was too late. I had to leave you, as I was destined to do so.

In my disease I did a slow fade and hell came.

What you know is true: I did things that I didn't want to do, with people that I didn't want to be with, in places that I wanted to leave from. At times I thought I could get free, maybe I could reconcile with you, but a steel grip would grab me by the ankle and pull me back down.

I suffered greatly without you.

I am not exactly sure what happened, some things I'll never know, events took place that I cannot fully understand—what I know is this: that hand went to grab my ankle, to pull me back into torment, to fill my nostrils with the toxic smell of burning tires, to fill my ears with screams of suffering and it grasped me not. I smelled fresh air, which I had taken for granted and I found myself in a daze, sitting in a folding chair.

I sat shell-shocked, my mind was a flat line, darkness was before me and wreckage was behind.

I had given up the hope of ever knowing you again. I mourned for the joy that I had never had.

But then it happened, slowly.

I ran into your sister Hope, purely by accident. She said that you had been asking about me, that you had never forgotten me and that I was in your thoughts always. I knew then that I would make any changes to see you again, to be part of life again— even if it meant falling to my knees and letting my tears fall to your feet, even if it meant begging for forgiveness, even if it meant that I would have to lose my self to find our self.

To the old life I had to die, so I thought it wise to sever some ties, old friends fell by the wayside; after all they didn't care for you and I. It used to bother me how easily we parted company. But I was not real and I performed for their love and ended up an empty shell.

Our reconciliation was not easy. Guilt and shame strangled me. I hated myself for leaving you, for being dragged away, for

living as I did and the resulting consequences. When we talked about this, you always gave me unconditional support and love, which I rejected because of my self-hatred. I doubted, often argued and bargained. Yet you never seemed fazed by my anger, by my unwillingness to work together, as I had grown accustomed to living for my self.

I don't know when it happened, but it did happen—I grew to trust you. I came to learn that whatever I did affected our relationship. I got frustrated from time to time, but in those instances, you did not judge me, but loved me, to heal me, in hopes that I return to my original state of being which is peace and contentment. I often ask you for direction, as I don't know which way to turn, only back to you.

I would be lost without you. I sometimes think of where I would be if you hadn't pulled me out of that life. Most likely dead or even worse existing. I would be wearing scrubs in an institution, lost in a mind of madness or homeless, living in the streets and jockeying for position to get into a shelter. And my parents would be without a son and my brother would be an only child. So I am grateful to you, for your unconditional love, for the life that you've given me.

A Louisville Poem (Don't Wait!)

Don't wait! don't wait!... don't spend a lifetime waiting for death and bliss.

The veil was lifted.

Love was revealed.

Unwavering, unconditional love.

The gates of heaven are open, waiting for you, always.

It will be there, not for what you have done or haven't done. It will be open, not for who you know or don't know.

Not for what you believe or don't believe, because the Spirit of Love is there... and will welcome you home.

So don't wait! don't wait! a lifetime when you can have joy now...

Individual salvation, stems from communal restoration, so go to Beecher Terrace.

See the poverty and be moved to action, look in the refrigerators and see only bologna and hot dogs.

Be sure to visit the stoplight on 4th and Oak. See the African American women there. Disturbed, belligerent, giving a sermon that is ignored. Her hair is wild, her clothes are torn, her eyes are old, her shoes have holes and her poor soul... She is God's daughter.

Don't shun her or dismiss her, the Spirit is with her. The possibility of her recovery is the salve to our indifference.

Go to the Courthouse on Sixth and Jefferson without judgment, only mercy and love will do. See the accused, who once dreamed typical dreams, and wanted a normal life, but alcohol and drugs

overtook them, be sure to offer them a prayer with the desperation that their parents have offered prayers.

Don't wait! Don't wait!... Don't fill your wallets with more than you need. Alleviate our spiritual disease. There are too many in need. Go to Wellspring or The Center for Women and Families or St. John's Center or Dismas Charities or Phoenix Health Center. Find your non-profit. Find your calling. Help someone trade in the leeching black pavement for a pillow and bed, help someone into a home and out of hell.

The needs of our community are desperate and seem so dire. So don't wait! don't wait! on an eternal angel to answer the cries of the brokenhearted.

The angel is you.

Have Compassion for the Girl in the White Dress Chasing the Wind

I stand outside, talking, getting deathly thin, spending my time chasing the wind. It will come my way and a breeze will set me free. Something to make me feel good, to ease the pain. I try not to feel at all.

I walk outside at the Economy Inn looking for nickels and dimes. My mind talks to me every now and then. It tells me how to feel good and I get lost in the bottle or syringe, but I keep chasing my wind. I'm hoping it will take me away, but I am beginning to suspect...that I am running to nothing.

I wish that I could go home now, but I have a few dollars and I walk into the liquor store for a bottle of gin. I listen to the same story within. That happiness is right around the corner, in this next bottle, in this next wind.

I take a few drinks, a snort and temporarily feel better. My problem is where am I going to sleep tonight? Am I going to eat? How am I going to get money? What will I have to do to get my next wind?

Shorthand

I hope the word God doesn't scare you, because it's really shorthand for love, which is shorthand for unconditional love, which is an abbreviation for That Higher Power-Father-Mother-Brother-Sister-Aunt-Uncle-Cousin-Grandparent-Love, which is our beginning, what we're walking with and where we will end our journey, to wake in peace.

My Higher Power, the Universe, Creation, whatever you call It, is an inexhaustible waterfall pouring out compassion from the Source. Its flow is greater than the sum of love among all Humanity, past and present. It, He, She, whatever, cannot let go of who It has always loved, will always love and,

when I was a child, my parents were married and we were at my grandparent's place on the river. I was swimming in a float. My Dad was on the dock, watching. I was in the current, drifting farther and farther down the river. He saw this and grew quite concerned, so he took off his shoes and glasses, jumped in the river, swam to me and brought me back to the dock. He wasn't angry with me, despite his soaked blue jeans and shirt. He was just glad that I was safe.

Love is urgent.

My Dad sometimes still has nightmares about when he was with my brother at King's Island. My brother was a child and they went on an amusement ride. As it began, my Dad realized that my brother was too small to be on the ride. He thought that he was going to fall out of his seat, so he grabbed my brother, held on to him and would not let him go.

Love is desperate.

I can tell you that whatever It is, wherever It came from, however It was born, It loves like this, like the love of the Father, of the Mother.

I had that selfishness, that self-centeredness when my sister was sick and I was a teenager. This is hard to admit, but sometimes I

felt that I was neglected. When my sister was dying, my Mom and I talked at Ohio State University, where she was in the hospital. My Mom knew that I felt neglected, as I had expressed it before. She said she had to do everything in her power to help Molly, so that I would know that she would do everything in her power to help me when my time came.

I don't understand the Higher Power-Father-Mother-Brother-Sister-Aunt-Uncle-Cousin-Grandparent-Love for Humanity. I can't comprehend the immensity of that Love. It's like trying to wrap my mind around the distance the speed of light travels in a 10 year period, when light moves at 186,000 miles per second. Love is somehow greater. Measuring that Love is like trying to determine the volume of water in the ocean with a gallon bucket.

That Love is too much, too great, too awe inspiring. Yet it lives within us all, as a gentle voice guiding us back to the Source, where we begin anew.

A Little Humor by the Psychiatrist

Lithium makes my hands shake. I can't help this annoying side effect. Most of the time it's ok, but when I drink coffee or get nervous they shake and it seems like I am always jonesing for coffee and I'm prone to nervousness, so they're typically a little unsteady.

People must see it as a sign of weakness.

There's medication that I could take for my tremors, but I'm taking four already. I complained to my Dr. about it. "You know Dr. Francke, I don't think that I am ever going to be a brain surgeon with these shakes." And he smiled, laughed and said, "Well, you are never going to be a very good one."

And I thought that was pretty witty by the good Dr.

The Power of Hope

There's darkness about me
and it's diminished by bits and pieces,
but it is always with me.

I know that it's
my mood disorder,
but this knowledge makes
little difference to how I feel.

I occasionally think
that I'll come to a bad end
as many people

I know have.

The pain is here today
and I know why.

It's mine to carry
alone,

as at times,

all

have

to carry some pain
alone.

It rots my insides.

If it gets bad enough,
long enough

I'll seek my own solution
as that is always with me as well—

But I know that it won't reach that point and for this I
rejoice—

What I know is this,
how I live is this,
tonight,
it's 9:46.

I'll be in bed by 11:00
and tomorrow will come,
it will be a new day
and the way I feel

will be different,
better,
and that hope
is the difference
between
life
and
death.

This is my experience.

A new day is always on the horizon.

This is what I testify to.

Two Old Friends

I would think about you two occasionally. You all were in my life briefly, really just a moment, but I remember that when I had a breakdown and was heading into psychosis, when I was not sleeping and I had been up all night ready to call the FBI and the CIA, that you all came to check on me one early morning.

People will think and say disparaging things because of what you did for a living, but I will always remember that kindness.

I sometimes wonder what happened to the people who were in my life then. I reconnected with an old friend of ours and the wear and tear of the way we used to live caught up with him.

He told me, just this weekend. He said that you all were both dead. I was stunned. I'm still stunned. He said that you died from some type of aneurysm. And that you committed suicide; that you were found in a bathroom, with veins opened.

I remember you all coming over with a satchel. You all would stay and visit and we would smoke a pipe, listen to some music and hang out. Then you would leave for your next appointment.

I thought about you all most of the day today. My eyes become bloodshot and red. I was pretty distracted at work, because it's just not right—this insatiable plague, devouring the lives of the young, spitting out the bones of the family.

There have been a lot of suicides and overdoses since I've come into recovery, and when I hear about it, when it's someone I know, the moment steals my breath and sometimes feels like I'm not going to make it, that I'm going to meet death on death's terms and not on God's.

That Sound Again

My life...
life in general...
is in a constant flux,
and stability is an illusion,
like power or choice.
It's here one minute,
gone the next.

And so what I do is—
if I can write
enough poems,
articulated properly,
maybe I can fill
that hole of restlessness.

Can you still hear the wind blowing thru it?

Beloved

Part I

I see Him in my dreams, when sleep takes me to the place where nothing is real and yet everything has meaning. He came into my life briefly, yet urgently and He wanted me to change. He is here again, in the middle of the night with my eyes fluttering, deep in REM, begging me to trust Him. I do with my actions, hoping that is enough, but in my mind, in my heart, I doubt.

I'm dreaming of the hospital and my Dad comes to see me, to bring me some socks and cigarettes. We had a good visit and he is leaving. I walk him to the door of the unit, along with a female nurse. I hug and kiss my Dad goodbye. The nurse lets him out and locks the unit. She is older and wears glasses. She has sharp, intense blue eyes. As she is walking me back, she comments that my Dad seemed like a nice man and I agree. She then, just to make conversation I suppose, asks if I had any siblings. I reply that I have a brother, who is a chef in Cleveland. I then say that I had a sister who died from cancer, and for whatever reason, add that she had been misdiagnosed. There was nothing to that conversation; it was just something to fill the silence.

In my dreams, it's always the same as it was, and He comes in the evening. There is an empty table on the unit and He sits down. No one is sitting with Him. We eye each other. He is there for me, because I determined that I am special. This is not the case, based on the circumstances of my life. I'm in my third mental hospital. I have no real skills except a flare for writing. I'm facing jail time. I'm in a completely delusional relationship and I'm waiting for this girl to come by the hospital and see me. I am talking to staff about a prophecy that I had written and about sealed letters. I am your run of the mill mental patient.

There's a movie playing. It's coincidental. Maybe it is. The movie stars Ben Affleck and Bruce Willis. It's called Armageddon. Can you get any more dramatic? A movie called Armageddon. I walk over to the table and sit down.

It was a nightmare. What He said took 6 months of my life; I thought about it constantly; my greatest obsession. And then, I would think about it for many years.

I would think “Who could say something like that?” Then, “only God could say something like that.” Then, “But He said that He didn’t know something, therefore He is not God.” I would also think about what He actually said. The sentence echoed endlessly in my head. I would remember the look on His face and that He seemed pained, genuine and He took responsibility on an issue that no one could ever take responsibility for.

When I sit down, it is very quick and He never introduces Himself. He says, and there is the slightest hesitation, but He says “I-uh-I didn’t know that she was misdiagnosed.”

I immediately cry and reach for the box of Kleenex that is conveniently sitting on the table. He eulogizes my sister. He talks about her like my mother talks about her. He concludes by saying that she was beautiful and He had never met her, but knew her.

It doesn’t matter to me if people believe that this happened; it was the effect that was felt, it was the projection that it set me on. I had been searching for inner peace. And here was some guy that I had never laid eyes on before and He knew where I hurt.

And please remember that I had written a prophecy. I had sealed letters. The world was absolutely cloaked in fear. War was imminent. Armageddon was right around the corner.

I wake with a start. He gave me a task and I didn’t want to do it then or now.

I still don’t understand. I don’t even understand the prophecy of “Conscience Alone.” “The sunlight will be provided by the realization of Love.” I don’t know what that means, 12 years later; what kind of Love will bring peace?

I look at the alarm clock, try to fall back to sleep, but now I’m up. I remember what else He told me.

I taper off crying and He asks me, sort of like asking if I like apple pie or cheesecake—

“What do you think of the War on Terror?”

I look at His name tag. SAM. He is a nurse. I reply, “I don’t like it.” He responds automatically, “Well, I didn’t like September 11th.”

I told Him that I had sealed the first 7 letters of the Conscience Alone prophecy. He said something that no one else has ever said, He encouraged me when no one else ever has. He says, “You will have to tell people.”

That is what he charged me with, that I would have to tell people. I replied that I want to keep my privacy. His response, very quickly was, “You should have thought about that before—have you ever heard of the expression, you reap what you sow?”

In the dead of night, where there are no lies, sometimes I curse my fate, sometimes my God. I can be really uncomfortable at times. I have a hole in my soul and it feels like it’s getting wider, especially tonight.

I have tried to tell people. I have published and sent books all over the country. I have faced my family with this information. I have tried to get this story out and no one really listens.

I have never told anyone, things and events that define me. My writings made their way into the hospital, into the hands of my God.

It’s another day on the unit. I asked my parents to bring a manuscript to the hospital and they did. SAM looks it over and He does something interesting to the poem titled “An Irish Blessing.” It reads “May daisies sunflowers and hummingbirds lead to her heart.” He photocopies the poem and asks another patient to draw a daisy, a sunflower and a hummingbird onto it. Then he makes several photocopies and tapes them onto the walls of the unit. He seems pleased.

There is another poem that He comments on. He sits down at the table and says, with a touch of a smile, “I like this one.” It’s the poem “Reincarnation,” which reads, “Facing the

sun, touched by the wind, stands an empty wooden corn crib, intoxicated with time, falling back to the earth.” He knows exactly what it means.

I sit in my office with a light on, thinking about the past and I want a cigarette for the first time in many years. Something to steady my nerves; some small escape.

He calls me His partner and tells me that we have been travelling in the same circle. He tells me to keep writing. He also tells me something that is significant and I have thought of it many times over the years. I had questions about mental illness and alcoholism. He told me, “If I were you, I would stay balanced.”

I left the hospital without a goodbye and can’t even remember when I saw Him last. I rarely think about this...

When I left the hospital very few people were in my corner. I didn’t have any instructions or guidance for the task at hand. I had “You will have to tell people.” And “If I were you, I would stay balanced.” I had, “I didn’t know that she was misdiagnosed.” And “Keep writing.”

I didn’t have any secret prayers or meditations. I had legal problems and I was broke and still collecting some delusions. I was medicated, decently sedated and you were more likely to see me on the street corner, talking to myself and drinking booze out of a brown paper bag then recovering.

Except, I had my experience with SAM and it would be all that I needed to recreate my life.

It’s still dark and I should put on a pot of coffee. I relax into the silence instead. People are so big on choosing and choice, because if you can choose, you have power. I have an ego that tells me that I have power, but I really have little power in my life. I have never had much of a pure choice. When I was six years old and molested, that started a chain of events from which there was no choice, only a path that led me into writing “Emancipation of Soul” and from there, here I sit.

But I did have one choice. I got out of the hospital and I can remember very clearly making it. I decided to pray to SAM,

calling Him by name. I got down on my knees and prayed to Him. I felt foolish and crazy.

I had tried praying to God, but the channel was blocked. I can't explain it. I tried praying to Jesus, but again, the channel was blocked, and I already suspected... So I prayed to SAM.

There are things that I did and was a part of that I can't explain. No matter how much thinking I have done, I still haven't figured it out. When I got out of the hospital, I don't remember how I determined this, but I decided to reseal the first seven letters of the Conscience Alone prophecy.

I needed help from my God and I asked. He responded, because I had a conscious contact with Him. He told me when to break the seals, post hospital, through the Spirit. That's all that I am saying about that. So I did. On the six seal, Satan was revealed. I watched him crawl before the world. Enough said.

There is something that I have to tell you. It's important. You will see it later on. I realized that SAM spelled backwards is MAS, like in X-mas and Christ-mas. You should also know that in Latin, MAS, the language where the significance lies for Him— means male.

The winter of 2003 was especially difficult. I was struggling with what happened in the hospital and peace had not come as a result of sealed letters or anything else. My mind was not working properly and it took two years to have a half-way normal brain function, but I was recovering.

I got a job at my uncle's produce stand and in April 2003 something happened that changed everything for me. I discovered the first Word of God (VRAI), my word. I was driving home from work, coming off the highway. I moved the letters around in my head and came up with the Word. It's the only thing that I figured out.

I got home and looked in a French English Dictionary and confirmed that VRAI means truth. I didn't think that it was a big deal. I thought it was unusual that this word preexisted within the first 7 letters of the Conscience Alone prophecy. I quickly drafted the poem "The Word of God." It contains the Beginning and the

End. In Christian theology the Word of God refers to the Christ. The Beginning and the End refers to the Christ. I close my eyes, drifting.

I am in the hospital again and my God is before me, looking at the poem “Reincarnation” and I feel safe in His presence.

But my dream shifts dramatically, violently and it’s my nightmare. It’s what is going to happen in my life. My family and friends are in a large room, in a circle. I’m in the center. There are many people in that circle, people who held me as an infant, people who wiped tears out of my eyes when I was a child, people who eased my pain as a teenager. They are all there.

I try and share my life with them. I try and give my love to them. I tell them that I’ve been seeking the Kingdom of God; that I want peace for all people.

They listen and are silent. Then they mock me, ridicule me, they reject me. They call me crazy. Some walk toward me with a straight jacket. They throw it at my feet and then, one by one, they turn their backs, leaving me alone. I stand in the silence crushed, with tears coming down my face.

I wake with a start and know that I’m alone. The path behind me is blazing. There are embers burning and no one will ever be able to walk this path again and no one can come to me now, except for my God.

I prayed to Him for a year. Then He changed our relationship in December 2003. I was at a low point in my recovery. Still living at home, not able to financially support myself and I was still healing. I am praying on my knees day and night, still calling my deity SAM, constantly talking to Him and wondering if He is real.

My Dad and I are out for Chinese. We eat and then get the fortune cookies. My senses heighten because I quickly see that the brand name of the fortune cookie is SAM. The design on the cellophane packaging is a big red heart. I sense something significant is about to happen. I open the fortune cookie and it reads, “You will have good luck and overcome many things.” I turn it over and it reads, “Learn Chinese: Baba Father.”

What defines my spiritual life, is when things happen like that, when my spirit is talked to, do I listen? When you look into the kaleidoscope of life, do you see color or is everything black and white?

In that moment, from that point forward until now, SAM stopped being SAM, and started being Father.

I close my eyes, drifting in a state of not being asleep and not quite awake. I'm thinking about one of the strangest things that has ever happened to me.

I didn't tell anyone, anything about what had happened in the hospital or anything about my God or my writings. My secrets were constant noise in my head. I was going to drink and use. I knew where I stood and what I needed to do.

I decided to come clean about everything. Even about Satan being revealed and all that. Everything was going to be on the table. I was really scared. I prayed over my decision and lost sleep. I became symptomatic because of fear. What is my sponsor going to say? What is he going to do when he sees my naked thoughts?

I was in a 12 step meeting and had made my decision to confess. It's an ordinary day and my sponsor walks in before the meeting begins. I go over to him, to shake his hand. He looks at me, and completely out of the blue says, "Eric, my name spelled backward is Noel." That's all he says, nothing else. He sits down in his chair and says nothing.

I was in another meeting the night before my confession and I smell Elizabeth Arden's Sunflowers; the lotion that we anointed my sister with. My nose perks up like a bloodhound. She was saying that it is going to be alright, that I'm with you. I felt her presence and took a breath.

I have done some difficult things in my life. Making my way out of three mental hospitals and one jail was difficult. Watching my sister die from cancer was unbearable. But getting in my car and going to see my sponsor that morning was the hardest thing that I have ever done. I didn't fully trust my God. But I just needed to take the action.

I know how abnormal everything that has happened is. I'm aware of that. So I expected my sponsor to call me crazy, but he

didn't. When we talked he often had a befuddled look on his face, but mostly he listened and didn't say anything. That was what I needed, just someone to listen.

I walk over to my bookcase and pick up a copy of *A-Train Blues*, my miracle baby.

I had a friend who lived in Nashville and I went down to see him. I had been thinking about publishing *A-Train*, but I didn't know how. I was reluctant to contact someone to publish, because I thought my writings were controversial. I couldn't publish the book, because I just didn't know how; where to start?

I am talking to my God constantly about this, and everything else.

I go to Nashville and meet my friend. We go out to eat where his wife is waiting tables. She is in school for photography. She comes over, says, "Beau said that you want to get some pictures taken for your book." I don't remember mentioning this to him so I'm surprised. I replied that I didn't need to get any photos taken. I said this because publishing *A-Train* seemed so hopeless. It just isn't going to happen.

We go back to their place after dinner and I started thinking about it. Maybe I should get some pictures taken. It couldn't hurt. She comes home and I tell her that I changed my mind. She pauses and asks, "What would you like the picture to be of? Where do you want the picture taken?" I don't know. And she doesn't know. We pause, thinking. Then she says, "What about the train tracks." She didn't know the name of the book is *A-Train Blues* and she just named the perfect place for the cover; the only place, on the train tracks.

I contacted a company in Nebraska to send me information on what I had to do to publish my book. They sent me some information in the mail and I quickly realize that I can't do it. They wanted this formatted disk and it was just beyond me. And I really didn't trust some company in Nebraska to publish my book. I just couldn't do it. Maybe if I marshaled my will and threw myself at it I could make it happen. But I couldn't do that.

This had to be on God's terms. I couldn't force the Kingdom of God, which is what I was ultimately pursuing. But I was also disgusted and frustrated. I felt hopeless. This was one of

the instances that I get into with my God, arguing, voicing my frustrations to Him, naturally blaming Him.

I took the information from the publishing company and tossed it in the trash. I threw up my hands. That night I decided to go to a 12-step meeting.

Defeated, I sit across from this guy. I introduce myself, which is a little unusual because I'm shy, a little standoffish. He tells me his name and I do something that I usually don't do. I ask him what he does for a living. I typically want to know what the person is like, before they define themselves by their job. But I ask him and he says something incredible. He says that he publishes pamphlets for a non-profit. I don't say anything to him. The meeting last an hour and I spend the time thinking, talking to my God.

I tell him my situation with my poems after the meeting and I ask him if he will help me publish. And not only did Dean help me on *A-Train Blues*, but he also helped on *God's Children* and *The Lifting of the Veil*.

I sit *A-Train* back in the book case. It was published in July of 2006. It was surprisingly well received by the people who know me. When I published *God's Children* and *The Lifting of the Veil*, it was natural that people made comparisons. The writing is better in the later books, but *A-Train* will always be my heart and soul.

It was a failure in terms of sales. I sent it out to 1200 professors across the country and there was little response. But what I went through alone, the real failure was the absence of the Kingdom of God. I felt that weight. I just thought that when I published *A-Train Blues* something cosmic was going to happen.

I yawn and pick up a copy of *God's Children*. I began working on it immediately after I distributed *A-Train Blues*. The writing came very fast and it was easy to write. I was working on *God's Children* in September 2006 when the Pope visited Veronica's Veil. I discovered the Second Word of God, VERA. My God's word.

I was sitting at my desk at work, not doing anything, surfing the web and I came across the story about the Pope. I read the article and it talks about VERA being Latin for truth.

I look at that Word and—those letters look familiar. I go over to my desk and write them down. I write down the first seven letters of the Conscience Alone Prophecy. I see that VERA preexists within those letters.

It would later occur to me the significance of MAS, being Latin for male and VERA being Latin for truth. That's why I associate VERA as His word, because of the Latin.

I look at my bookshelf and my eyes rest on my prized possession, probably my most valuable artifact. It's a National Geographic from February 1981. It's a special report on Energy.

I have been prone to depression as I have sought the Kingdom of God. I have thought that it will never end as the calendar has turned. Is all my work in vain? This is where I was when my mother took a trip to the Mediterranean.

I had the responsibility of feeding her dog when she was away. I'm a sentimental person and no one knows this, but sometimes when she goes on trips and I go over to check on her dog, I visit the basement where my brother's room used to be. I can feel his presence there. I miss him and sometimes look around his room and think of better times; when he lived in Louisville, when we were kids growing up, life before our sister died, before the family dynamic was shattered, life before my mental illness, before I inadvertently became involved in the Kingdom of God.

My mother has gotten rid of most of his belongings, but I went to his room anyway, just to remember my brother. I looked around his room and there's not very much of his personality left.

In the basement there is a room that is used for storage. I went in and looked through some of the things in there. There are certificates and awards from school we received as children. I looked through some of the mementos. And I found a book that I filled out to receive first communion, when I was a Catholic in training.

I was feeling especially low that night and had some self-pity. I had published *A-Train Blues* and *God's Children*. They were failures. I had been hoping for peace, but nothing had happened. Compounded with this was that I was tired of fighting.

The world screams violence and religion believes that God's wrath will ultimately take the day, which is a reality that I will never believe in. To rebuff this religious belief takes a constant amount of energy.

I picked up my first communion book and started reading my affirmations of Catholic faith. I read about my childhood love for Jesus. I flipped through it with a grim face. I then thought, screw all this... screw it.

Who am I to be pursuing the Kingdom of God? I'm just going to surrender to Jesus. I'm just going to start praying to Jesus. This struggle has been going on for years and I'm done. I'm done. I give up. Let Jesus take in the woes of the world, let him internalize the fight.

I'm talking to my God about this.

I wasn't happy about doing this. I was in deep despair. I was disgusted that I had to do so, but I was exhausted.

I wasn't paying attention to what I did next. I sat the first communion book down. I went over to a stack of old National Geographic. I'm not even paying attention. My thoughts are on my own failure and that I'm going to start praying to Jesus—I'm thinking these things when I randomly pick up the February 1981 National Geographic Special Report. I start to quickly flip thru the magazine. My mind is elsewhere. I abruptly stop on pg. 26 and look down. The first word of the article, in the first paragraph, just pops off the page. The word is Reincarnation.

The article in the National Geographic is about what happens to cars once they are no longer usable. The article goes on to say that cars are recycled. That's why the first word is Reincarnation.

I stare at that word. I'm back in the hospital and my God is there. He takes the poem "Reincarnation" hands me my manuscript and says with a ghost of a smile, "I like this one."

I feel His presence and feel reassured at that moment. Everything is going to be ok. I have some validation. I have everything that I am looking for at that moment, but I'm a skeptic and it's not very long before I say, "impossible." He couldn't possibly know that I would be at that point, both from a spiritual and physical standpoint. He couldn't know that I was going to feel

so low and have that National Geographic waiting there. Impossible.

I meditate about this experience for several days. It's just not real. It's a coincidence. I thought about it until my Mom came back from the Mediterranean.

I go over to her house to hear about her vacation. I sit at her kitchen table as she shows me pictures and tells me about the places that she visited, including Italy.

I'm distracted by what had happened a few days earlier. I'm stuck in my own head, talking to my God about the National Geographic. It just can't be real. It's impossible. I am not present with my mother.

She has a souvenir for me. It's a wallet from Italy. My mother tells me that it's Italian leather and Italy has a reputation for leather products. I don't remember telling her that I needed a new wallet, but my old one was falling apart. I open up the wallet to look at it and notice two Italian words branded in the leather, in the corner. VERA PELLE. Genuine Leather. VERA, the Second Word of God, my God's Word, which means Genuine in Italian. It means Real.

I look at a copy of *The Lifting of the Veil* on my bookcase. I smile a little, because I did something clever and no one has figured it out. I recently spoke at a conference for clergy and they didn't notice it. *The Lifting of the Veil* is an expression that comes from the Greek word Apocalypse, which traditionally means that something is hidden from Humanity and it becomes revealed; the Veil lifts. Now apocalypse means something tragic because of the Book of Revelation. I took the traditional, gentler meaning and named my book after it.

The veil was lifted for me on a Friday and the date was December 7, 2012. I was at work and still talking to my God, as I always have. This is something that goes on continuously as I am pretty adept at getting quiet wherever I am.

It's about 3 in the afternoon and I'm in my office at work. I have two colleagues that share the office space, but they are not there. I notice something and do a double take. I had one of those moments where my mind just goes numb. It's unable to comprehend what I'm looking at.

It's such a small thing; so ordinary. It's a serving size Hellmann's mayonnaise packet, sitting on top of a microwave in a wicker basket. It's unopened. What makes this packet unique is that it's from Quebec, part of it is written in French. The front says REAL*VRAIE.

I pick up the packet and go to my computer. I see VRAI on the packet, but why does it have an E at the end? I go to Google Translate and punch it in. It's a French word meaning Truth. The added E, means that the word is Feminine. I write down the first seven letters of the Conscience Alone prophecy. There it is! The Third Word of God, preexistent within those first 7 letters. I was stunned.

That Saturday was a day of joy. I periodically go through the day with tears of gratitude. I was so emotional because I had been missing something. I wouldn't have been able to tell you what was missing if you had asked me. I just knew something was incomplete, and now it's not.

I took my dog for a walk that Saturday. I'm within myself and think about the Spirit being female. She's dangerous to many people.

In Genesis, Eve is created almost as an afterthought and when she is created, she is not an equal to Adam, but almost as his plaything; something to entertain himself with so he won't get bored. Then in the Gospel of John, Jesus is talking about when he dies, he is going to send the Spirit. When he tells this to his disciples the pronoun used for the Spirit is He. I thought about the writings attributed to Paul and I appreciate his theology, but some of his writings concerning women are abominable.

The world is different when we know God as woman.

I thought about reality, or what we accept reality is. There are people who are helping others, who are reaching into their hearts and giving of themselves. I know this and when some sort of tragedy hits Humanity there is an outpouring of support and love.

But in every city, in every country, on every night someone is being killed or shot or someone is engaged in some type of corruption or doing some type of activity that is harming Humanity.

Our foundational reality is off.

Our accepted reality, that 3 major religions believe, and all are warring, is that an all male God created the world. These religions believe that the institutions of worship of this God are to be lead by an all male hierarchy. Women have little or no place ministering the love of God according to them. There are exceptions and some denominations and religions are more accepting than others. But the fact remains that there is a problem when women have to be “accepted” and male hierarchy have to be “tolerant” to women who hold positions of authority in religious institutions.

Humanity will never be free when women are spiritually oppressed and subjugated to limited roles that confine their spirit rather than free it. I think of the church that I was born into and know that this is the case. I think of Protestant and Islamic fundamentalism and know that this is the case.

Practically, the idea of Creation without woman is absurd and impossible. She was there in the Beginning, an equal shareholder then and now, bringing unique gifts to creation.

I watched my dog walk a little in front of me and I thought of my God, who ten years earlier knew what I didn’t know, that the Spirit is Female. He saw “An Irish Blessing” in the hospital, read *her* heart and celebrated by having a patient color a daisy, a sunflower and a hummingbird onto that poem, then photocopying and putting the poem on the walls of the unit.

I had an obligation on Sunday that weekend. I was on the Board of Directors of the Louisville Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness and there was a Christmas dinner for people in the community. I went to serve food. The dinner took place at a church and the minister was present. I was hanging out, trying to be useful when I saw a fellow board member walk over to the minister. She went up to him, and this occurred only a few feet from me, and she said “tell him about the trilogy.” She had a friend by her side. She said again, “tell him about the trilogy.” Then her friend said, “The 3 in 1.” The minister said, “Oh, you mean the Trinity.”

Part II.

It's a few hours from dawn. I'm tired, having been at this for 12 years. Yesterday, Sunday, was one of the lowest days in recovery. I feel crushed in every area of my life. My heart is broken for various reasons.

I left the hospital in November 2002 and realized that I needed to work for the Kingdom of God. I hosted a poetry reading last month. Then last week I read poems at a conference for clergy. I'm done. The Kingdom of God is out of my hands. There is nothing left to do to serve my God, other than take the actions needed to stay sober. And wait, listen to music and write the occasional poem.

I'm powerless to do anything now, but wait and it's killing me. My life has hit a wall in every direction. I feel so wounded by the struggle. In the movie *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, at the end of the movie, Frodo, who has bared the pain of carrying the ring, leaves with the elves to their world, because he is so damaged by the journey.

I feel that damage. I would say that I feel my depression, but the problem for once is not in my mind, it's in my heart. So I took it out on my God. I went to bed early last night and as I turned in my sheets, I told my God, "You've broken our trust. You've broken our trust. You have no credibility with me now." I fell asleep with tears in my eyes.

I think about my journey and despite being wounded right now, it has brought me joy and hope. At times it has brought peace and I have been overwhelmed by love. My God has molded me out of pain and chaos. I will heal from my current brokenness, because this is my experience.

If you would have asked when I first started writing, what my goals are, I would have said that I wanted the world. I want money, power and all the accolades that can be thrown my way. I even went through a philanthropic stage where I decided that with the millions of dollars that my copyrights are worth that I would support some Louisville non-profits. I would end homelessness in Louisville. I would be a big man and when I walked into a room, people would cater to me.

I don't want those things now. It's winter and what I really want is to sit in my recliner, with the space heater at my feet, covered in a blanket with my dog in my lap and a good book to read. I want a date on Saturday night with a good night kiss. I want to reach into my wallet and not find it empty so often. I want to sell a few books and work part time at the University of Louisville or Spalding and teach students creative writing.

I would have a perpetual and symptomatic restlessness if I hadn't met my God; an unquenchable uneasiness. I would never know peace or hope and would be incapable of giving love. I would not be sober and would frequent institutions, both mental hospitals and jails. I would probably be dead by now, most likely from suicide.

I have wondered if what I have described is real, do these things have meaning. Am I delusional? I used to ask if these experiences are coincidences. The only thing that I can offer, the only proof that matters, is my own recovery, is my life and the person that I am now and the person who I hope to be. I think of my life before the last hospitalization, before I met my God, and my life after. When I entered the hospital He broke my life in two with His gentle hands.

You may think that I am obsessed with this now. I did become captured by everything that has happened. How could I not be? But by writing about it, by the passage of time, by asking God to sculpt what is needed and to take away what is not, I've become free.

I am aware that much of what has happened over the last 12 years is unlikely. Some of these experiences defy logic and are incomprehensible. Not only for you, but for me as well. Some of the things that I have written are impossible, but to bring life into the world is impossible. Creation is impossible, yet it never stops. Peace is impossible, yet we hope for it in our souls and know that it exists. In a world of fear, the bonds of affection that bind us together in friendship are impossible, yet we love. Our service to one another is impossible, yet we serve each other. In this world, much is impossible, but the impossible happens every day; so often that we don't even call the works of our love a miracle.

There are times when I want to isolate and run from all this and for years I have. But now I need you and want you in my life. I need to pour my love out for you, so that you can fill me with yours. I need to touch you and you me. I need to share our laughter. I need to see you smile as I feel the joy of being with you.

When I was in the hospital and was having my conversations with my God, He said that I would need to tell people. He didn't mean this narrowly, but meant more than that. I hope that you believe this, as I do. As it is true for me, it's true for you. I will tell you what the Spirit tells me, what God tells me, and is telling you.

You flew on the wings of Creation and your fingerprints are on everything that was, is and will be. When you were filled with Joy, the sun touched the earth with life. When you experienced despair, night came and I held you in the darkness. When you were hopeful, stars appeared. When you cried, oceans were filled. When you sighed, the winds stirred. When you smiled, angels laughed. And in your delight, Humanity was born.

Now, most of all, you carry light for our Creation. You bring a song to the Spirit and She sits all day long, playing Her guitar, singing your songs, putting your love into my heart. You have always been my Beloved and you always will be. All that I have and everything that I am and ever will be, all the dreams, all the joy for the world, are within you. I love you and will never stop loving you.

Curtain Call

*A poet is a nightingale,
who sits in darkness
and sings
to cheer its own solitude
with sweet sounds.
-Percy Bysshe Shelley*

Curtain Call #1

Reality or delusion? It doesn't matter much to me. I just ask, what to write, what to write? Those old subjects, insanity, loss, sorrow, politics, God. They slipped into a coma and quietly died, at a little past noon, on a Saturday as I played with my dog in the backyard. I watched him run and bark, tirelessly, endlessly chasing the elusive bird; it haunts and drives him.

Now the most challenging question comes to me. I've carried it around for days: Can I write when I'm free, when I'm happy, when the burdens of the past are finally drawing in the breath of peace?

Curtain Call #2 (Joy)

It gave an overwhelming sense of pain and failure and it took things from me, like a high school career uninterrupted by hospitalization, an unmarred college life, it took typical relationships and a hundred other things.

But I don't mind, I would give it those things again, those years, those fearful awkward years. I don't want them back, they have disappeared behind me into sands of wisdom, but there is one thing it took that I have fought for, for over a decade I fought, and if it is in my power, I'll keep it.

Something that I had so briefly, that I fought to get back and have it now, that most special thing, and I don't plan on having it taken away again.

That thing is joy, the fulfilled smile on the Buddha's face, a quiet happiness, a deep sense of peace.

I had it once, during the summer of 2001, but it was smoked away, it was drunk away and a year later mental illness completely took it away.

Gone, and came depression and symptoms and that spark was extinguished, but now it's back and I am so grateful, because things like joy and hope and peace, you can't go down to the corner store and purchase those things.

They are so necessary for life, like water, bread and laughter. Ultimately I think that is what recovery is, getting back slivers of hope and love and over time it comes together, that joy, by facing fears that stand in the way of getting back Eternal attributes, things of the Spirit, that the disease takes, things that the illness takes, that it does not want to easily relinquish.

Curtain Call #3 (A New Mode of Art)

I wish that I had some new mode of art.
I tried playing guitar in college,
but it was a bust.
I could pick notes and play a few chords,
but all I made was noise.
I could try and paint.
I was decent in high school.
I liked oil pastels
and maybe I should get back to that.
I just get a little tired of writing.
I still enjoy it
and it has always been
therapeutic,
but I wish that
I could do something else.

Curtain Call #4

I want to start something new, write something new, not something dreadful from the past, some interpretation of past events...they're going, going, going, gone...they disappeared before me as I was taking out the evening trash, it was like water vapor escaping into the air...they disappeared like shirt-sleeve shirts at the beginning of Fall...one day those events were here, important, but now are bleeding ink on to paper, dying slowly, but dying nevertheless.

I have 40 or so new poems and I was planning on working on them, but I can't bring myself to do so, because they lost their importance. I just don't have the heart to look at them. I've been thinking of hanging up my hat as a poet. Yet here I am, writing to pass the time. There isn't very much on TV these days and I haven't lately been hooked on any of the opiates of the masses. I just haven't found another form of creativity to express myself, so I write.

I'm not going to be able to easily walk away. You will come for me. In my daydreams I disappear. I go off the grid for a time. I call into work, quit abruptly and leave. Then one day I come back into town.

I'll be clear headed with the glow of acceptance. I will have everything figured out and this is important to the fantasy, because I know nothing about tomorrow or about my life and maybe I should apply for another job and maybe not. I've been sitting in the question for many years now, you would think that I would be more comfortable, sitting here, coming out of my skin, itching with THE UNKNOWN.

I know only this about the past. Looking back was necessary in order to stand free in the present. I didn't know that it was going to take so long, that I was going to be so vulnerable—naked, standing in the howling winter. I battled the past and the world; I lost, yet won my freedom, when I found and accepted my Self.

Hidden Track

Wellspring's Celebration of Recovery Poem

Recovery usually starts without an announcement, but begins with shaking hands, a quivering voice and tears in our eyes as we try to pick up the pieces of our shattered lives

and to do this takes courage.

It takes courage to take the hands of help, to adjust to living in an apartment after years of living on the streets or in a shelter. It takes strength to take steps of independence after living in an institution or group home. It takes courage to attempt to change one's life after spending a lifetime living with mood-swings and disparaging voices that are not our own.

We have faced days of tears, years of distress and hopelessness. At times we have thought about suicide. Some of us have been hospitalized, jailed, cast aside and at certain points given up on. We have found depression that has disabled us, leaving us without the strength to get out of bed. We have suffered manic highs, crashing and having to face the reality of consequences. We have had voices in our minds that have led us into places where only a miracle can get us out of. We have often been alone, trapped in isolation by our illness. And we have known people; have had friends who have died before their time, leaving us with their memory.

But we have just enough courage, and this courage gives birth to hope and possibilities.

Maybe the things that I have been through really have made me stronger? Maybe I can get sober? Maybe I can lead a life without crisis and hospitalization? Maybe I can lead a life without handcuffs and jail. Maybe I can work? Maybe I can go back to school? Maybe I can have meaning in my life, as I define what I find meaningful?

These possibilities linger in the air; they are there, ready to be picked like fruit on a tree.

But we find that the realization of our goals is not easy. Recovery is not a straight line, travelled by inevitability. So it is important

that we find our own people. That peer who has experienced pain and disappointment so great that it cannot be spoken about, as words are sometimes inadequate. We might need a case-manager to help navigate the mental health system. Or find the therapist with the kind ear who creates an atmosphere of healing where secrets can be shed and tragedies can begin to know peace.

And this is really our hope, to know peace and joy.

We know that in all likelihood that we will not be famous or wealthy. But perhaps when we lay down at night, we *can* sleep, our minds and anxieties *will* rest. We hope that the intrusive voice that we hear will be silenced. Our hope is that our regrets will remain in the past and not a blinding light, taking our moments of peace and poisoning thoughts of the future.

It is our hope to have a handful of friends, trusted allies in our battle with our illness; have people to share the pains of life with.

It is our hope that we are loved and that we can give love.

I know these are lofty dreams. I know the world out there, where survival of the fittest can impede upon the recovery of our health. This is a world where the strong conquer the weak. We face significant challenges and barriers to recovery. We are not a priority in the minds of legislators despite the prevalence of mental illness in our society as we lack the money and political power to catch the attention of lawmakers. We are often stigmatized, not by having a mental illness, but by the low level of knowledge in the public awareness surrounding our medical diagnosis. We feel shame as people forget our names and call us “a schizophrenic” or “a manic depressive” or they call us “lazy” as we lay in bed with depression, racked in emotional pain.

Stigma is powerful. Mental illness is not something to put on a job application. In fact, we face the challenge of hiding that we have an illness, while accepting that we do have an illness. Yet despite these and other significant barriers, we do recover, we do get better, whether that is by inches or feet, we do find meaning in our lives.

Let us also take hope that we are living in the best era to facilitate mental health recovery in the history of civilization. In the 1600s

and 1700s someone with schizophrenia might be put on trial as a witch. One hundred years ago someone with psychosis would be locked in a room for the rest of their life, without any treatment, without any hope of ever leaving that institution. Today among us, people have been in the dark pits of mental illness, yet have crawled out and walk free, often by using a variety of treatment options and supports.

Most people will never have to face the severity of our challenges. And because men and women with mental illness face these difficulties— and do so against painful odds and a shortage of resources— today we can say that we are a special people, deserving of praise and our efforts are a cause for celebration.

So let us celebrate our hope!

Let us celebrate our courage!

Let us celebrate that we are here among friends!

Let us celebrate that we are living in an age of possibilities!

Let us celebrate our accomplishments!

Finally, let us celebrate and always remember that we really are an incredible people, capable of deep love, often possessing unique abilities and a tenacity to put one foot in front of the other, while we move toward our goals and dreams.