

Ordinary / Overlooked

Richard P. Gabriel



December 31, 2025

Contents

Renewal	1
A Start	2
Orkney	3
Danger	4
She	5
Figures	6
Fi	7
River Side	8
My Children	9
On Repeat	10
I'm Not	11
West Texas	12
In A File	13
Where Did Everybody Go?	14
Another Day For	15
Deserter	16
Me A Ghost Apparently	17
A Woman In The Window	18
Woman In Snow	19
We Are Dead And This Is Hell	20
Ice Laden	21
Finally I Know	22
A Short Vacation	23
Famously Gone	24
From the Times Journal dated July 29, 1943	25
AFC Championship	26
Women On High	27
Skip's As Old As Me	28
In Any Sense	29
Up North	30
Hate Rules	31
The Ending Explained	32
Gabrielle	33
Jury Duty Scam	34
Cable Guy	35

Brown Ice	36
Longs To Be Lost	37
She / It	38
Riverine	39
Bisbee Kind Of	40
In A Warm Bag	41
Wavelike	42
She Hated Everyone	43
A Warm Hug	44
Who Needs Forever	45
The Sea And Me	46
Ear Learns	47
Headstone Fable	48
Ness	49
Silky Guitar	50
Favorites	51
Hardly	52
Walls	53
Kalyna's Goodbye	54
Homeostat	55
Drops	56
Garfunkels	57
Kind of Blue	58
Dopish	59
Not Me	60
Adriatic Town	61
Aghast	62
Desert Drifter	63
Mistress	64
Fools	65
Lush	66
What?	67
Flows	68
Wordish	69
Pink House	70
Sending It To Me	71
Gimme	72
Private Memory	73
Care Versus Beauty	74
Pastures	75
Disappoint Me	76
At The Bridge, For Instance	77
Bank	78
Life Takes Place	79
Hate Is	80

Secrets Abound	81
Seeing It	82
Jamming	83
Shade Your Eyes	84
Sucked	85
Coffee Place	86
Time Lapse	87
What Is Death?	88
Bisbee Street	89
Krampnitz	90
Porn Watch	91
Dark Shades	92
Revealed	93
Luck / Strange	94
Dachau Film	95
Where I Am	96
Dream A-Sudden	97
Still Believe	98
Benched	99
Know Dear	100
Into The Sunset	101
Get Out	102
Concrete Action	103
Fly Away, Fly Away	104
Reichskanzler	105
Music To Me	106
Guess What!	107
Twice	108
Under Trees	109
Looking Lost	110
K vs P	111
Merrimack River	112
North All	113
Cry For Help	114
My Bridge	115
Cranes	116
Tenting	117
Epilog	118
Cold Piano And Wind	119
Lo	120
Don't Lie	121
Kris	122
Agape Inn	123
Under Achieve	124
Funny	125

Yell	126
Think Twice	127
Barned	128
Overload	129
Our Elected Chump	130
Ever?	131
Unmemorable	132
Signed Anyway	133
In My Opinion	134
She Sneered	135
Diminishing	136
Car Sit	137
Examination	138
Groom	139
Jo's Mom at 96	140
Hax	141
So There	142
Think Twice	143
Tolerate	144
Bisbee Friends	145
Blasting	146
Regrettable	147
Wandering In Wonder	148
S. D. I.	149
LLM vs AGI	150
No Where	151
Here I Be	152
Those Assholes	153
Still Have It	154
You And Me	155
Night Before Opening	156
Mistake Again	157
Diffusion And Me	158
Dobyns Quits	159
Unlikely Change	160
Real / Quick	161
Plum Island Beach South	162
Best Orbit	163
And Then?	164
Many Toos	165
The Stateroom Was Full of Samovars	166
Man On The Street	167
Constitutional Drift	168
Make America Crappy	169
SND & RTN	170

Wires	171
And Me	172
Not Much	173
Songs	174
A Bird Flies Through	175
Shepherd??	176
Nancy	177
Cluttered Thinking	178
Busy	179
Under	180
End	181
D'John bin Trump	182
Far Away	183
Rabbit Style	184
Negative	185
Once More	186
Near Joppa	187
Praise Of A Flat	188
Meredith	189
Tubes	190
Parke Mathematical Laboratories	191
Newburyport	192
Looking Bad	193
Age or Wisdom	194
Cook	195
Tracy Died	196
Scrunch	197
Why Care	198
Jazz Bones	199
It	200
Pathways	201
Thin Dark Brows	202
Bring Around Dawn	203
Back	204
After Storming Winter	205
Dying To Music	206
Lots Of Ferries	207
Lost Highway	208
And Her Too	209
Now	210
Bad Schedule	211
Minders	212
Bridge Street Cemetery	213
Young	214
Later?	215

S Cottage Grove	216
Deep Hole Not Much Water	217
World Under A Light	218
Nearsighted	219
Market Square Restaurant	220
Luckiness	221
Fritz T	222
Jimmy	223
News	224
Imagining	225
Match Compiler	226
D'J	227
General Relativity	228
Kurkjian To' Me	229
Dog in Woods	230
Paradise, I Surmise	231
Ron	232
Rogers Funeral Home, Haverhill	233
Plum	234
Screenshot	235
Hacker	236
2025–2029	237
Till Death	238
Long Futures	239
PR	240
2025	241
Cared	242
Alone At Night	243
Twelve Pages of Diary	244
Always Cold	245
Debris	246
Croft Life	247
Frozen In Place	248
Lost Again	249
Appetite	250
And So	251
Christ In The Desert	252
Never Come Back	253
Loft	254
The Knocks	255
In Market Square	256
What's Wrong	257
Cooped	258
And That	259
November Trip	260

Poynt For Instance	261
Drinkers	262
Misguided Search	263
Definition Of Beauty	264
Talking Around	265
Cambridge	266
Out To	267
Flower Time	268
Tingwall	269
Salt And Honey	270
Circles; Squares	271
Red Barn And Poor	272
Pund	273
West Voe	274
Paradise	275
Foula	276
Bressay	277
Fladdabister	278
Stone Hit	279
Before The Factor	280
Cast Away	281
It's All About The Wind	282
Tell Stories	283
Only Bird Song	284
Under The Brow	285
Even Forever	286
The Great Storm of February 1900	287
News Is Always Bad	288
Last Person In The Daal	289
Peerie Isles	290
From The Isles	291
Papa Stour	292
Lonely Hilltop	293
If Only	294
Foo	295
A View	296
Summer Day	297
Hot Mow	298
Competing	299
Peabody	300
Women	301
Tingwall	302
Prayer And Work	303
Ending Word	304
Lino	305

Only Bird Song	306
Papa Stour With Her	307
The Long View	308
Life's A Chat	309
Island Girls	310
Last Wedding	311
On Your Own	312
The Lord's Prayer	313
Nowhere / No One	314
Day In Tamworth	315
Driving	316
Chicks	317
Down To The Waterline	318
Oh Dear	319
Instead Of Selling	320
GB	321
Hospice	322
Mill Stone Dancing	323
Affording Fun	324
Thanks To You	325
Firsts	326
Over A Shoulder	327
Billy Bob	328
Short Line	329
Oh Lord	330
Music And Driving	331
Cold Hard	332
Market Cross Tree	333
West Of Las Vegas New Mexico	334
For Adults	335
Not Again	336
Travel Time	337
Cold Alone	338
Far From Town	339
Best Roads	340
Fair?	341
Lerwick Romance	342
O Lord	343
How Stupid Can Someone Be?	344
This Stupid	345
Eye Doctor Fiasco	346
Still Tired	347
Grey	348
North Nights With Her	349
A Night + Light Snow	350

Constantly	351
Hopi, For Example	352
A Trip To Skip	353
Porch Life	354
Some Win, Some Lose	355
Piano Unmanned	356
Marrying Kind Of	357
Perfection In Strange Places	358
Paradise	359
Aloneness	360
Snow Night	361
Drone	362
Numb	363
By The River	364
Ritual of Unknown Meaning	365

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Renewal

stubble field across the road
what's left of the corn
will be plowed under
or tilled under perhaps
after a good burning
renewal they all say / all write
my memories go back to Meredith
dancing the pony or Jill posing
on a table in art class
my stupid wandering in that field
laid against the thrill
of young women far away

Thursday, January 2, 2025

A Start

much after bedtime
I needed to visit
the men's room
on my way back I stopped
by her cell / her blinds
were open / my headlamp's
light passed over her eyes
she rose up but I turned
away and into my cell two
down from her's / this near
encounter was left mentioned

Friday, January 3, 2025

Orkney

I sit in my writing space
no one emails me / writes me
calls me / my dream of becoming
unfindable seems alive
but is it really just
being unpleasant / I'll
ask that Shetland woman

Saturday, January 4, 2025

Danger

people stay clear
have for decades
two palm readers
refused to read mine
what am I outgassing
is it my size
my unsmilingness
those who loved me claimed
it was the danger
I'll ask that Shetland woman

Sunday, January 5, 2025

She

I put my streamer on lo-fi chill
to keep from working up about her
the sound was soft / percussion clicks
kept time / the beat was western
were she here she'd turn it off
or walk without cover into the rain
-filled rest of the world

Monday, January 6, 2025

Figures

after he died some planned
a gathering under the copper
beech right by his place
with special pizza and lemonade
hot day / river smells coming up
Armenian names in every direction
but except for those some
no one came though many were called
the most common remark

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Fi

beauty of lo fi
imperfections and dust
tape distortion
but garnishes over perfection
and when no one tells you
you check all your kit
to find the problem
but the problem is a kind
of beauty

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

River Side

we made our way to the restaurant
after warming our hands on each other
in the car by the river
one could be forgiven for thinking
this story had a meaning beyond
events / and I forgive you

Thursday, January 9, 2025

My Children

all of the fancy plans
none appeal to me
only music and a little writing
every way I can avoid others I do
one day I'll regret more of this
some will argue but I won't

Friday, January 10, 2025

On Repeat

cheap stereo amp into homemade speakers
fed by a cheap tape player or a decent
turntable or a good receiver my father
got cheap from a friend at the company
hours on repeat looking at pictures
yearbooks / books / in a cold room
with a piano and pool table nearby
no wonder I'm me

Saturday, January 11, 2025

I'm Not

some of my friends are old people
they have decided that retirement
requires stupid activities in horrible
surroundings / they go on cruises
they dress funny / their actions
are the actions of crazy people
it's almost as if they've given up
but the funny part is that they
are always happy

Sunday, January 12, 2025

West Texas

one day I saw a long road
in a crap-o state down south
straight as a boring afternoon
a low sun played on rising dust
a pickup picked up my gaze
looking one end to other
I couldn't think of a reason
to do other than keep on

Monday, January 13, 2025

In A File

growing up everything stank
manure / exhaust fumes
decay in the swamps
hot sanded oil for roads
heavy meat being fried
prospects for success
the idea of love
I'm here but as far
as my grasp of where the sun
looked down from beyond
the skeletoned branches in winter
to the west / typing this in

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Where Did Everybody Go?

someplace I've been there's a bridge
across a river that scares me when
I sit on its bank too far from the road
from there I saw a woman padding downstream
against a tide bent on coming upstream
in winter I wouldn't be surprised
to see ice floes sifting past
in a distance smoke to see and smell
that woman / where'd she go

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Another Day For

known only for the drifting sad
song written decades ago the songwriter
from a cold country settled for a gorgeous
woman / settled in her even colder hometown
up north / he at times plays the piano solo
alone in his imaginary work hut out back
after the short snow riddled walk
the piano needs tuning

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Deserter

I lived alone for a year
the only year I did
most nights I'd put a song
on the turntable or cruddy
CD player / a sad one usually
play it over and over in the dark
either on repeat or by getting up
and reputting the needle down
for hours / for hours marking
loneliness

Friday, January 17, 2025

Me A Ghost Apparently

now that lying is standard
the people who steal plots
are free to make money
isn't that what greatness
means when the means
to greatness is meanness

Saturday, January 18, 2025

A Woman In The Window

a scotsman found a photo
over a hundred years old
of a woman in a great city
sitting on a windowsill
it seems she was washing
the window / she stopped
to watch the photo in progress
the scotsman spent weeks
trying to figure out who she was
he didn't find out for certain
but he still guessed / did
he love her / do you

Sunday, January 19, 2025

Woman In Snow

a little snow / specks
on the road now but
by tomorrow we'll be
up to the sills or eaves
when heating oil runs
out until the roads
are plowed only the wood
we chopped / cut / split
will be our en-doing
until then she will stay
in her room not eating
not being

Monday, January 20, 2025

We Are Dead And This Is Hell

today begins four years
of / the decline and demise
perhaps
of a country I once respected

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Ice Laden

delicate / stillness / warmth
in a room filled with cold air
winter and the darkness
songs played on my homemade
stereo that I thought sounded
perfect sound declined
on this better but not perfect
system / my ears too work
less well / other songs work
better / like the delicate
still warm soundtrack from a crappy
movie

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

Finally I Know

a dream of mine
lost in the rush
of worry / of longing
nothing came of any dream
I had because my reach
went nowhere / anyone
could tell because no one
stayed at hand / as long
as someone else / something
else stood by I was
passed by

Thursday, January 23, 2025

A Short Vacation

why did the prairie grab me
why the flat views / the waterly
wheat fields / the funny idea
of privacy / the distance making
loneliness the sister of chill
driving straight into the sun
was it the book about death / the story
of the farm and a graveyard / written
strangely by a stranger who could
have been me

Friday, January 24, 2025

Famously Gone

to find a place no one can find
to then live there until the end
to gather books and songs to read and hear
forsaking all / to turn away as others
had done / to commit to writing
the truth that matters and the lies
that matter / all the while remembering
the few who were never others

Saturday, January 25, 2025

From the Times Journal dated July 29, 1943

Walter Pierce / merchant in the Sewellton Community
with his son William Pierce 16 years old
was working in the garden digging potatoes
when they had trouble which resulted in the son
striking his father with a hoe on the head
causing the elder Pierce's death a short time later
the son has been held in the county jail
since the killing / Mrs. Pierce Walter's wife
and mother of William was the only eye witness
to the murder / the shock has kept her in bed
since the tragedy / an examining trial
will be held when she is able to come to court

Sunday, January 26, 2025

AFC Championship

bad news from events
you cannot control
cannot be blamed
on you / neither
should you take
them personally

Monday, January 27, 2025

Women On High

I watched her and her
mother in long coats
scooting across High
Street up to the castle
red hair / special noses
which to choose would confuse
most men

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Skip's As Old As Me

burgers in grease
mayo / tomatoes
home taste / corkscrew
Suzie Q / fries / mayo heavy
lobster roll / lemonade
under a tree on a bench
clouds a-forming / scattering
I made this a routine
after I returned Summers
gone now / piles gone
only the river can't leave

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

In Any Sense

the stone stands vertical
just offshore / in the cut
between me and it waves
crest as if coming home
above birds throw shadows
on me / on both of us
with luck we will not fall

Thursday, January 30, 2025

Up North

in a VW new and smelling new
the road disappears too fast
under the curved front
when the heater's on
the heat's too hot in my nose
I put fancy speakers in back
and a hot amp / my 8 track
blasted through slush
and on black ice even
over that bridge

Friday, January 31, 2025

Hate Rules

could I have imagined
being alive when the United
States of America ended

Saturday, February 1, 2025

The Ending Explained

I pretend to be the silhouette
on the horizon / I pretend
I will be the man holding a horn
of fire riding up ahead to start
a patch of light and warmth
for those who follow / I will
not be there
then

Sunday, February 2, 2025

Gabrielle

I scroll through photos
in public / selfies
in focus some / spanning decades
the constant is the woman
light and blond who one
time in Denmark bought
me a bag of chocolate candies
for no reason / no story
then she was gone

Monday, February 3, 2025

Jury Duty Scam

nearly scammed
by a clever narrative
that smelled bad at every
turn / I managed by luck
to force them to mistakes
even with great special effects
including a cage designed
for no escape / but I won

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Cable Guy

think man
you bought a pricey
cable too short
had to rearrange your desktop
though shorter is better for USB
and audiophiles / but think
man / measure twice / order once

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

Brown Ice

ice coming down the river
brown from shit flushed
in / ice bulging upward
from decaying gas / Merrimack
when the world was our toilet

Thursday, February 6, 2025

Longs To Be Lost

I sat and listened
to her play slow guitar
sing in a low voice
a string of complicated
lyrics wrecked into a story
about a horse that ran
away and loss and lively
times following on

Friday, February 7, 2025

She / It

I had a muse who hated me
I believed in connection
she favored usage
her past lover was the smartest
man who ever lived
I hoped to get my licks in
I was her workhorse
until she slid off
I still write about her / it
say it

Saturday, February 8, 2025

Riverine

on a last day when my legs
failed to lift I made it to the edge
of the river when it was turning
from tidal flow to river drain
sunset fell from the sky
I remembered rides over this bridge
a single hope played over and off
the way I'm pictured is a lopside
having no teachers and few wins
I never learned how the bridge
related to the river / so
I sit

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Bisbee Kind Of

across the street she walks
a flow uphill / I slide downhill
her shape lifts the fate of humanity
I notice she never notices me
her dress hides my angle
I'm made of the longing
she long ago discarded
the sun agrees

Monday, February 10, 2025

In A Warm Bag

think about it
the way sleeping in a tent
during a relentless snowfall
resembles the onset of long
term loneliness / the end
of long term doubt

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Wavelike

I made it a point
to sit cold when
I stared at girls' pix
I wanted to love
I made it a point
to play songs in a mood
a single light / a spot
I guess I mean I made
it a point to have a spot

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

She Hated Everyone

when I catalog all the dumb
things I've said and done
that list is longer than everyone
else's book of fun deeds
my mother thought me weak-minded
I didn't mind / but she was right

Thursday, February 13, 2025

A Warm Hug

when it turned out
the first draft of the gentle
much loved tale of tolerance
was a hate-filled diatribe
and an editor shepherded it to life
we all were reminded how easy to kill
gentleness and tolerance is

Friday, February 14, 2025

Who Needs Forever

on my system a tune I heard
in a properly New York hotel
hip in the 1990s / swiftly suave
and disco beatish but with jazz
sung by Astrid so we get a black
by Brazil vibe / the room I recall
was an outfit of black down near
Wall Street and my meetings
were just as hip

Saturday, February 15, 2025

The Sea And Me

I made my way to the edge
of the ocean where everyone's
tears and hopes were poking
up in waves / behind me the rats
were everyone hoping my last trip
will be their first / I suspect
or I hope way back behind in winter
woods the women who saw me here
will turn away before

Sunday, February 16, 2025

Ear Learns

takes a while for the sound
to teach the ears how to hear
it / for the sound to deepen
air out / filter the music
into small snips of grip
I used to think it was the gear
changing but today I know
it's me

Monday, February 17, 2025

Headstone Fable

one day a crazy person
will steal my headstone
use it as a stable platform
for a very expensive
turntable / smart

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Ness

through life with eyes
behind veils of dumbness
a ness is a high place
so my veils were the hight
of dumbness

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Silky Guitar

strange / I notice an older woman
sometimes her allure trades
on my longing for another past
I notice ideas I could have used
for stories / poems / books
their allure puts me in a mood
to wonder how old I am
where exactly I went wrong
like how every woman I finally
loved picked me / not
the other way / strange
is my favorite idea

Thursday, February 20, 2025

Favorites

soft and quiet
snow dropping
a funny way to put it
onto wide pine branches
green to white over a night
a change like a love
developing over a glance
dark is a place for fear
quick love

Friday, February 21, 2025

Hardly

people decide to change up
how the world of stuff works
all habits need ditched
move forward newly
hard

Saturday, February 22, 2025

Walls

the stone walls in the woods
placed around ghost fields
formed my thoughts on separation
some rocks rang bell-like
others clunked / I found
the smell from lifting
them unlike everything
ever after / stories locked
in walls / locked in fields

Sunday, February 23, 2025

Kalyna's Goodbye

she befriended him
taught him about her
led him to new pieces
showed him her fear
he learned help
learned / perhaps / love
the last thing she told
was a letter full sorry
said she was fine
in the end he rode away
from that last place

Monday, February 24, 2025

Homeostat

we download the real
into us / perhaps
we upload the real
from us / perhaps
it's like pendulums
swaying on a table
soon they all
are the same

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Drops

chill / I listen
make my surroundings
furniture not focus
all around up and under
because loneliness
winter cold / drifting
thoughts / nothing
realistic

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Garfunkels

sometimes the past
joins without seams
when father meets son
or mother / daughter
young and fresh
old / worn
famously diminished
when they plaster
an orchestra behind
and produce too hard
but the ties remember
when the past would rather
fall apart

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Kind of Blue

beauty of clear music
even when horns sing harsh
travels to where people's minds
sleep after a day of rock

Friday, February 28, 2025

Dopish

piano once my instrument
I dreamed of insuring my hands
looking back I am stunned
by how stupid an idea
that was and that I
really thought it sensible

Saturday, March 1, 2025

Not Me

after years of deliberate
ignoring I've at last
found I am over the feeling
that the near wife of a great man
could have wanted someone less

Sunday, March 2, 2025

Adriatic Town

a narrow street
in a narrow town
sitting on her sill
her rear forthright
overhead / sun angled
crosswise but near set
what was up there I
could have wondered
but I kept head down
and feet slapping

Monday, March 3, 2025

Aghast

I followed her
she never led
was she only a wish
as a song said once
no sense in this
I drove as if a willing
fool / as usual
this woman was too smart
I never could form a question

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Desert Drifter

someone I didn't know
aside from videos
died today after life
support was removed
he had curiosity
and faith / I pray
that prayer counts for
something

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Mistress

late in night
a woman's voice
singing over piano
her tone alto at most
was she in a church
or a digital reverb device
was I in love
or a tone bender
I know it was cold
her voice coming to me slowly
the piano at least
seemed well tuned
when I die the song
will become harsh

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Fools

younger I was tireless
big distance meant nothing
especially on bikes
time gone by I laugh
about pride / nothing
accomplished reached
the level of accomplishment

Friday, March 7, 2025

Lush

once lush the elm lané's
become fragments / moonlight's
plain there / hiding's
improbable / killers
have no foothold so life's
likely to remain lush

Saturday, March 8, 2025

What?

writing up a sentence
I mean / what you observe
is supposed to happen
this has to be related
this has to influence
this has to happen
this is what will happen
work on putting these things together
then examine its validity
its objectivity / the sentence
will be finished / chunks
become multiples / a whole logic

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Flows

by the river around supper time
I sat on a bench no one's
ever sat on before
I was waiting for the urge
to eat but the perplexed wind
coming down valley kept
me waiting really for a presumptuous
woman to stride mirroring
the river flow but before that could happen
the tide reversed everything
that ever happened to me

Monday, March 10, 2025

Wordish

day was when I'd
walk from school or work
to a bookstore just to look
a rare day I'd buy nothing
did I read a lot
hard to say / I liked words

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Pink House

the Pink House gone
falling to rational thinking
despite unhurried strangeness
at least I and hundreds of others
photographed it for decades
hundreds painted it
let's pray the bureaucrats
had a nice celebratory meal
in town

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Sending It To Me

pretty sound of ultra music
in a light reflected off storefronts
what I expected to take forever
was promised to go ahead now
but as always happens it took
forever / almost forever

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Gimme

who cares about the past
no one once money's on the table
then all that matters
is scooping it up first
if you are such
I hate you

Friday, March 14, 2025

Private Memory

just a chimney left
a firebox at its base
slab steady all around
patched and added to
I can point to the spot
where I first encountered
a woman / recovering

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Care Versus Beauty

passion projects
mean more to men
who make them
men chosen for poetic
correctness / maybe
mean more to them
who make them
not as nice a noise
but nicer to those
most careful

Sunday, March 16, 2025

Pastures

the cows heading
in around sunset
heading for the barn
they'll put their necks
between cow-smoothed
rails / hay plopped
in front of them
or some grains
behind they'll be milked
a slopped floor will direct
their piss to drains
leading below the barn
this is why barns are on mounds
this is what they will endure
to be sage and fed
can we blame them
or ourselves

Monday, March 17, 2025

Disappoint Me

never a let up
something always wrong
I am less able to deal
than before / why
age / fear / hopelessness
at least my new DAC
sounds great

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

At The Bridge, For Instance

winds / sometimes important
blowing through pines
then through timothy
or down a river valley
toward a sea or up
a river valley toward
a range / if my car's
parked all windows down
in July in the right spot
I might be able to pretend
a sort of / a kind of
love sitting there

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Bank

when can the woes stop
I can't sleep
I can't concentrate
fear dominates me these days

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Life Takes Place

approaching her door
open to the world
I could see through her
small place her open
back door where she
stood swaying and humming
sometimes singing words
a song no one would ever
realize was important
her voice up then down
her hair risen then fallen
I held my place at the door
of her place

Friday, March 21, 2025

Hate Is

special

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Secrets Abound

a sparse town with wider
streets than today
lined with sidewalks
tracks down main street
houses with space around
commercial affairs
making global things
farms of dairy
commercial fishing
not far downriver
the ocean
all this in a photo
taken one year
after Nana killed
her husband

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Seeing It

books and reading them
I wrote some too but
some might wonder
at my skill / some
sentences were pretty
I tried for clarity
over beauty / or is beauty
a form of clarity

Monday, March 24, 2025

Jamming

joy of playing a slow song
watching the bodies before you
adapting into the beat
you hope the drummer can keep
and you hope the lead you're making
up is not full of falter
and error / that the vibrato
makes the women want to search
for the meaning of themselves

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Shade Your Eyes

on a long bus ride
from center Florida
to San Francisco
they were not made
for flying and I'm sure
the bus had toilets
when they got here
the waiting was over
but not the hurting
which waited a few years
to kick in / robbing
everyone

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Sucked

listening to Ultimate Spinach
who can overstate odditudes
my being part of a band
at that time / in that place
you / reader / might wonder
how I could resist hopping
on that band's wagon
they were good musicians
the only problem was their music
sucked

Thursday, March 27, 2025

Coffee Place

flee to Potsdam
and hope the Russians
don't follow
live near their military base
visit their special cemetery
hope the food you choose
doesn't give you away
someday way in the future
the downtown they occupied
will spawn the coffee shop
you have come to cherish

Friday, March 28, 2025

Time Lapse

all the mistakes
boiled together
conjured the soup
of a child's despair
which became decades
later a hate

Saturday, March 29, 2025

What Is Death?

the soul leaves the body
on the third day
the spirit
on the ninth
while on the fortieth day
the body ceases its existence

Sunday, March 30, 2025

Bisbee Street

the street up Bisbee hill
once masterful now nostalgic
even new insides smell of dust
neglect and winsomeness
one storefront / once Woolworth
says where America finds home
America / if only

Monday, March 31, 2025

Krampnitz

the beauty of severe
unbridled destruction
most from neglect and weather
some from hate and art
to get there you break in
even performances require
this / Russians / Soviets
the ceilings fare best

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Porn Watch

watching porn online
the scenes and themes
stories and shows
boring and not in the sexual
sense / why are those filmmakers
so lame / why not something
worth watching / fuck it

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Dark Shades

the people who study murders
as a hobby get facts askew
based on sneaky thinking
and unbelieving / even
when their girlfriends
have pale green hair
and they hide their eyes
behind dark shades

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Revealed

what does soft music mean
when the system playing it
tears the recording apart
the people who made it
assumed people listening
had crap for equipment
instead my system likes to rip
bad apart / all the tests for revelation
pass around here

Friday, April 4, 2025

Luck / Strange

what happens when a jam
turns into a song
lucky we taped it
we figured out what luck
and collaboration had done

Saturday, April 5, 2025

Dachau Film

in a film from WWII in Dachau
while trucks traverse a quick-built
temporary bridge / in the background
a big house spews or belches or thrusts
black smoke out its chimney and I wonder
who lived there / what were they doing
as the troops advanced on hell

Sunday, April 6, 2025

Where I Am

I walked out of the house
after listening for hours
to the same song over and over
I took it as a warning
that I was not meant to live happily
anywhere never mind ever after
the meant it as twilight
I headed toward the branch laced
version of sunset

Monday, April 7, 2025

Dream A-Sudden

the dream so real
I could feel it in my hands
could see it in front of me
could hear the scream
notice the sudden action
seemingly planned but on a whim
among those so firmly of each other
the plan was instantaneous
that she didn't mind me seeing her
that way / that much remained
for days

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Still Believe

I met with her over cheap Chinese
speaking as cousins just meeting
in decade seven / she an ultrapacifist
and everything that follows on

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Benched

meet under the streetlight
she said meaning the one
on Victoria Pier by the strait
after midnight / after 3am
on a bench we'd wait for sunup
I'd want to touch her back
she'd want me to do it too
but a rule said no and when a rule
says no no it is / isn't it

Thursday, April 10, 2025

Know Dear

meet by the flashing lights
we'll eat quickly then walk
the piers and seaside streets
until it's time to take ourselves
to bed / you one way me the other
everyone can see

Friday, April 11, 2025

Into The Sunset

the saddest kiss in TV history
a flawed red-haired woman played Irish
filmed under floodlights and artificial
heavy rain in front of the most
iconic house in Lerwick / she plants
it & flees / the series never recovered
and the music

Saturday, April 12, 2025

Get Out

before retiring each who've contributed
round up their wits and talents / find
someplace to pass them / write a story
that happens to forget them / place
a final thanks in a box buried under
a near dead birch or oak / or something red
drive into the desert and down one side road
then another fork / and another / find
a place to park / hope no one knows

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Concrete Action

he dug a bunker
double river stone walls
sand between / an angled
entranceway / heavy double iron
doors / an inexpensive but mighty
rifle and harsh ammo to fend off
raiders / hidden way to breathe
what was above ground disguised
as a deck with cellar
built the same time as our pool
so all the cement making went
ignored

Monday, April 14, 2025

Fly Away, Fly Away

even butterflies will suffer
thousands of miles of fluttered
flight to escape the wrong place
how many have the courage of Monarchs

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Reichskanzler

ever wonder what you would do
were a strongman were to pounce
on your country / no one could imagine
the answer / now I get to live it

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Music To Me

such a thing as music
that wends into your skull
makes you tear up
then who will decide what to play
before the eulogies start
after they end / the dirt warms up
the sod peeled away awaits
a total recline / will the music
that filled your dead ears
seep out as time makes its way
over and over your rest

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Guess What!

who can imagine surprise
aside from words and abstraction
how to feel surprise not just think
it / dreams teach us the possibility
of it but to how to capture it at the same
time our eyes are full speed ahead

Friday, April 18, 2025

Twice

we took her to a porn flick
the night before we drove away
to California / she'd never
had a boyfriend / true to her name
she was plain / the man in the movie
pulled out / came hard on the ass
of the woman in the movie then put
it back in and did it again / Jane and I
had the same thought / never saw
that before / my wife was smart
she snuck us into the theater
through a side door / deep in
Illinois / never saw Jane again

Saturday, April 19, 2025

Under Trees

why does a dream wed a memory
help us choose the tree
we die under / and do it
with joy and hopeful resentment
she was someone I came to love
then came to abandon after she
abandoned me / as all do
her voice high passing through
bows / vows we wrote endearingly
and like the woman who hated
me decades later she hesitated
her touch / time wash

Sunday, April 20, 2025

Looking Lost

any house would do
for our first house
though neither had ever
cared for one we feared
nothing about it and our house
reflected our misunderstandings
we cooked making recipes up
based on the names of dishes
we'd heard like fried rice
where we fried the raw rice
then boiled as usual and why
not tasted ok / interesting even
cookbooks / maybe some day
was it surprising we're long
unmarried to each other and our child
hates us

Monday, April 21, 2025

K vs P

I preferred her sister
prettier / more alive
but already married
I should have paid more attention
and not settled for the wrong
sister

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Merrimack River

the river craves sacrifice
young is preferred
the current river revs
up its currents so when a child
slips the only thing left
is to beg prayers
rivers and God don't much
care

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

North All

the places / the times
where we walked / when
strong winds
late light or light
that never gives in
through it all we
did not ever connect
something was disgusting

Thursday, April 24, 2025

Cry For Help

we sit hoping for appeasement
while the rest of the world
tries to save our science
datasets and perhaps our freedom

Friday, April 25, 2025

My Bridge

the bridge wondered
why it changed decade
to decade with a roof
and sides / with heavy planks
until a bus plunged
through them
why so many who crossed
stopped on the banks
either side for hours
watching / snoozing
wondered why it outlasted
newer designs and techniques
where some preach efficiency
others like this bridge
go with careful over extras

Saturday, April 26, 2025

Cranes

loading cranes by docks
sunset behind them and a sad
song on my car radio
driving into Oakland
to look for a good place
to eat / pizza maybe deep
dish like over in Urbana
where it seemed like life
started except here it's
an fabulous ending

Sunday, April 27, 2025

Tenting

how to find my way into the tent
set up before an impending snow
storm a hour before dark
and wow would night be perfect
for me fitting nicely into her
life right now but instead her
words are the shape of the wound
in my life

Monday, April 28, 2025

Epilog

last night I dreamt of an epilog
where I'd explain to an unnameable
woman why so many poems are about her
even though she was never a thing
I'd collect all those poems
into one book to give her and then
I thought how stupid that was / my wife
explained this was one reason everyone
hates me

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Cold Piano And Wind

the pretty song
a piano in a ringing room
played as if metronomes
never existed / the pianist
uses the pedal a little
too much / she listens
with me / the piano over
heavy winds against our windows
up from the North Sea / everything
is cold

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Lo

what fun
adding dust clicks
to an audiophile recording
and labeling it lo-fi
chill or drone too

Thursday, May 1, 2025

Don't Lie

such a day not destined
to return / my plans
have me wasting here
accomplishing not much
reading not much
writing not much
only listening which
was my world at the other
end of my life

Friday, May 2, 2025

Kris

someone I knew
had hired in fact
who was scared of me
died today a few years
back at the age of 67
she lost her fear
but I still felt best
to steer clear while my wife
comforted her on Zoom
but I remembered her today

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Agape Inn

I fried fried dough
sprinkling powdered
sugar in the end
small pizzas one by one
hot dogs / burgers
all to earn a seat
at Sandy Lou's table
so that one day this
Florida blonde of blue eyes
would notice I was interesting
no matter she was at a Baptist
school in Texas on her mission
in Hampton Beach NH and all I
was doing was hanging on

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Under Achieve

half the world separates us
it doesn't feel half enough
for anything to make sense
it needed to happen decades
ago / lots of decades but
back then she was wrapped
in the smartest man / the most
talented man who has lived
in the past century / and me
hardly a blur as her eyes
swept past

Monday, May 5, 2025

Funny

Merrimac / Groveland
Palo Alto / Mountain View
Portola Valley / Redwood City
each a practice room
usually a garage but sometimes
a living room / Hammond
guitar / spanning 50+ years
but a talent that hardly grew
simplest playing / what musicians
call having fun

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Yell

we spent two weeks in our paradise
you and me / when I reached out
you crossed the street and whistled
the wind was warmer / the rain
more welcoming / limits
you asked me there / muted strings

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Think Twice

sometimes the most fabulous
babe latches on until she
figures I'm not the rake
she'd glimpsed at the wreck
site where her dreams confused
beauty and longing / meanwhile
we had a night above a street
far away whose streetlight
was strong enough to wake
her up

Thursday, May 8, 2025

Barned

bales of hay stacked
in the barn as old
as anything in town
but we never knew
hand hewn beams
wood pegs keeping all
together / once when
girls lived nearby
I climbed up there with them
and dove from a beam
to stacked hay / boy
style

Friday, May 9, 2025

Overload

town of losers
I among them but
alone among them
I made the most
of the little I had
went West kept
going West and after
a bit many fell for me
even though I never
delivered

Saturday, May 10, 2025

Our Elected Chump

every day there's a novel
take on stupidity based
on the boyish hatred
a particular chump brings
to the table / one can only
hope / for what not sure

Sunday, May 11, 2025

Ever?

by the river all day
reading / dozing
rain and breeze
birds and a sunset
when

Monday, May 12, 2025

Unmemorable

the smallest rain launches
onto my head once covered
with a thick of hair and now my steps
need care and strong effort
kind of like a program I forgot
how to write / like a poem
I forgot how to write

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Signed Anyway

45 years later
I decide to typeset
it again / my dissertation
the one Winograd said he
would not sign / the one
McCarthy said was not
very good

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

In My Opinion

when I was sitting in the cold
late night listening to records
or tapes of my sad songs looking
at pictures of Meredith or yearbooks
on a cheap Sears amp and speakers
my father made at the far end
of our pool room which used to be
Nana's apartment before she died
I never imagined sitting in the cold
late night listening to streaming
sad songs looking at pictures
on the Web on an expensive DAC
an expensive preamp / an expensive
amp and expensive speakers
which made sounds that seem to come
from everywhere / I didn't forget
Meredith but she chose poorly

Thursday, May 15, 2025

She Sneered

already the light won't give up
summer in the north / Shetland
and all the cold of that North
all the warmth some provide
I wondered about the smell of peat
burning against a rock dedicated
to reflection / like so many

Friday, May 16, 2025

Diminishing

working on typesetting
my dissertation I see
some brilliance some
silliness / it was
clear I did a lot
of work / no one
seems to have
cared much

Saturday, May 17, 2025

Car Sit

sitting in my car
watching
for hours / reading
a bit / if I have snacks
then that
whether it's by the river
or the end of the elm lane
or on a hill overlooking
by the ocean / with someone'
or alone / this is my
time

Sunday, May 18, 2025

Examination

why did you ask me to travel with you
why did you keep asking questions
you said I wasn't a rabbit
and you wanted to travel to strange
places for weeks at a time
then in the end why did you throw
me to the side / didn't I play nice

Monday, May 19, 2025

Groom

it was clear from the start
that everything that should
have been pretty was
and that meant that no woman
could love a person with more
thinking than preening

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Jo's Mom at 96

she divides the world in three
Japanese people
Americans
Koreans
classical white → American
spells bad → Korean
otherwise a Japanese person

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Hax

Kathy's dissertation
typeset in Pox
I'm redoing it in Tex

Thursday, May 22, 2025

So There

I'm from the Valley
of the Poets / not far
from Frost and Bradstreet
even closer to Whittier
add me to that mix
I've certainly written
more than them / plus
all mine are way worse

Friday, May 23, 2025

Think Twice

the piano playing on my desktop
stereo sounds almost real
how a thing so deliberately
mechanical can sound so sad
melancholy / delicate
is hard to figure / hard like
the parts that make up the piano
and the electronics that collaborate
to make the sounds my fleshly ears
pick up and my squishish brain
decodes / I add the words
to the song in there

Saturday, May 24, 2025

Tolerate

kitchen the size of a small closet
pivot from the stove to the refrigerator
step one step to the sink
the room I'm in now is bigger
than that whole house
the year before we rented a mansion
everything shows everything can be
tolerated / gotten used to
even people who hate you

Sunday, May 25, 2025

Bisbee Friends

shivering all night in an Airstream
in Bisbee one autumn even with all
the blankets in the place on top
of me / next day we toured desolated
Evergreen cemetery / what a silly
name / then we drove home

Monday, May 26, 2025

Blasting

my idea of good playing
was to blast out without end
but my chops were crap
listening to tapes
my strong point was rhythm
a kind of Edge vibe picking
notes with good but
not overdone reverb
I could never hear
this on stage

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

Regrettable

regret is on my tail
after retypesetting
my dissertation I
realized how subpar
a thinker I was
my mother was
likely right when
she told people
I was a plumber
more my speed

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Wandering In Wonder

when I listened to this song
on AM in the 1960s after hoping
it would come on / the only
way I could hear it back then
I never imagined having dozens
of versions to listen to / most
sounding like the musicians
are right in front of me
which time frame valued
music more

Thursday, May 29, 2025

S. D. I.

when young I was not good
not domesticated enough
not enough social hours
this made for hatred
I was puzzled / back then
but not now / slowly
dawning insights

Friday, May 30, 2025

LLM vs AGI

if art preceded elaborate
language how will LLMs
come up with art on their own
AGI my ASS

Saturday, May 31, 2025

No Where

refusing to come out
finally hidden all times
no one talks to me
I reciprocate
the best agreement

Sunday, June 1, 2025

Here I Be

why did I hide under the bed
temp-situated in the living room
for my ill near-death father
for hours while my mother
worried around the house before
time to visit him in Boston
Mass General / encephalitis
and I hid there for hours
unsure how to come out
and announce here I am

Monday, June 2, 2025

Those Assholes

sold as a way to rid
us of criminals / riddance
grabs mothers and children
because why not hide the truth
in an adjective

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Still Have It

the fear
sun gone down
every light in the house on
outside doors locked
garage doors locked
I thawed a steak and broiled it
watched television / we never called
it TV / the biggest knife in the house
in my hand or by my side
the fear when parents were away
the fear

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

You And Me

standing by the ramp
to the bridge
back when that little park
was perfect / we married
third try / friends and what
counted as family all there
story book / fairy tale
a day in paradise

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Night Before Opening

night watching bridge lights
people walking across ahead
of opening day / the river
caught by an extended open
shutter is smoothly swiping
past piers toward me
only the green girders remain
stiff stout and fixed
in the memory behind glass

Friday, June 6, 2025

Mistake Again

everything cheap my father said
when I told him he taught me
quality / he built his own stuff
I took it as quality / just
another example of me not
getting it

Saturday, June 7, 2025

Diffusion And Me

twilight sitting just beyond
the reach of doctors
they prod at the soul with instruments
of generalization

we are annotations in someone else's oeuvre
manikins classified by epistemology
ranked by adverbs
smiled at by witches with whitewashed hands
we feel / sometimes / like immigrants
in our own alphabet

Sunday, June 8, 2025

Dobyns Quits

somewhere / Dobyns quits
trying to name the stars
somewhere / Christa chews
through the silence like calloused
blades in the mouth
your dreams are drawn upward
then erased
cooling slowly
on the shoulder of a cop
who stopped naming names
someone mutters
roses / scorpions
a stool where a girl
once folded her loneliness
like panties in a workshop drawer
I keep what's gilded
even if it hurts

Monday, June 9, 2025

Unlikely Change

whine of a streetlight
funny how it freezes
just enough

sunsets hang
on a heavyweight housewife
wearing an outfit of pheasant
and apple / vanished exactly
in the cafeteria

killer values
gummy languages
heels in perfume
magpies lying

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Real / Quick

finding a way to make
it til tomorrow
which comes a little
quicker than many would
like / like real quick

Wednesday, June 11, 2025

Plum Island Beach South

only two things
moon in light fog rising
from the East
a hardly moving ocean
catching the moon's light
the rest is the texture
of offshore darkness
slowly projected everywhere

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Best Orbit

everyplace I grew
to love after going
back home is now gone
soon I will be too
until then I search
for great music
and listen over
and over just as I
did as a kid in that back
home place

Friday, June 13, 2025

And Then?

I was alone in the house
until I was 21
this meant I never learned
people / even 60 years later
that never learned stuff
has never been learned

Saturday, June 14, 2025

Many Toos

quiet music
night long
simple responses
darkness blends
with sound
eyes closed
music fills
every where

Sunday, June 15, 2025

The Stateroom Was Full of Samovars

Samovars muttered on the stateroom shelf,
their breath warm with rumors of Endicott.
A sculptor stoked grief in an icehouse kiln—
his swans unrolled, wings stitched from stowaways' maps.

Fred had lemons, but no hands.
The crank beneath the hospital whistled lullabies
to sleeping carrots in the basement drawer.
Baba wore shoes filled with violet bread.

Meanwhile, Haverhill cracked beneath a powder of whispers,
where devotion mingled with axe-blade butter
and the bakery smelled faintly of enemy smoke.

A cartoon of Helen bled through the ceiling.
Someone, perhaps the mechanic, was whispering
passwords to a handkerchief named imprisonment.

Monday, June 16, 2025

Man On The Street

when I visit Portugal
it's for the analogy
for the sound of a piano
played soft and slow
who can imagine the delicacy
such a hard and taunt
contraption can make
for those looking
for quiet metaphors

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Constitutional Drift

Parentheses barred, term appointed,
thereof the executive speaks in oaths—
citizenship distilled into power
preserved,
and marque riding the spine of electors.

States: their number, their departments,
their duties to Indians,
to consent,
ratify,
elect,
distinct as enumeration.

In cases devolved;
we are charged,
we are returned,
we are probable.

Together we consist:
arms, amendment, confrontation,
a posterity delivered—
superseded,
yet still swearing.

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Make America Crappy

smart way to handle
immigration
make the country so
unappealing no
one wants to come
here

Thursday, June 19, 2025

SND & RTN

music or sounds
rhythms with melodies
a hint of an instrument
did people make this
with computer made sounds
electronics and modern speakers
are tested artificially
can a heart cope

Friday, June 20, 2025

Wires

out the window
the sun won't quit
merely takes a short
duck but the sky
never darkens
overlooking the calmed
sea I worry against the next
line in the next
poem

Saturday, June 21, 2025

And Me

caring for her mother
means I can't care
for myself / cannot
visit the world I need
cannot travel as if
in pure light

Sunday, June 22, 2025

Not Much

when young I almost
imagined a life of thought
and fame / an intellectual
life / instead I became
a jack of many trades
and never let an employer
tell me what to do
in other words
I went through life
playing / became
the world's most famous
third-rate computer
scientist

Monday, June 23, 2025

Songs

listening I crave
the details in the recording
to me this is what
they wanted me to hear
if I wanted something else
I wouldn't change my gear
I'd change the station

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

A Bird Flies Through

sometimes the predawn mornings
are a little blue but mostly gray
and some black / even the water
making up the ocean is on board
with these choices / but over toward
the east the sun has a different idea
it teams with the air over there
adds a little touch of lightest
possible orange

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Shepherd??

I read the essay
it made no sense
every three words
in a row did but
nothing bigger / nothing
longer / they asked
me to help those writers
fix it up / how can I
do that if I have no idea
what it means

Thursday, June 26, 2025

Nancy

she was a strange girl
in high school and my friend
loved her to no avail
60 years later I flip
through her wedding album
pictures of horses and houses
Volkswagens and a husband
I met only once / under
all this her life spread out
I imagined her sleeping
dreaming of the wonder
some like me might have
dreaming of her

Friday, June 27, 2025

Cluttered Thinking

a train flashes past
years ago the family
in that house would
have perked their ears
to listen / to judge
speed and time / but
decades ago they moved
to Valley View where
they could heard but
for the insulation
of soil / concrete
regret

Saturday, June 28, 2025

Busy

the hot day
gives its all
to the hot night

Sunday, June 29, 2025

Under

don't make lists
of what you want
one day / most things
on them will stay
over there / usually
you will intelligently
settle / like a tree
planted in the wrong place
its roots will make it
the right place

Monday, June 30, 2025

End

photos I took back near home
the green / the snow
the cold / the sweat filled
heat / everything about it
appeals / others feel
it's creepy / sinister
be there at the end

Tuesday, July 1, 2025

D'John bin Trump

poets writing at the start
of dictatorships wrote
as usual and unusually
I get the chance to be
one of them

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Far Away

the stone walls were still strong
some with larger stones on the outer
planes and rock debris between
I never thought of the thinking
that went into them / the other thing
was they were in the woods with stupendous
trees right there / back when I was a kid
living on the farm / one of those chunks
of rock debris sits here by me / nothing
soon will matter

Thursday, July 3, 2025

Rabbit Style

our rabbit broke loose
superfast into the woods
late afternoon and all night
the woods noises reigned
next morning there he sat
under his hutch waiting
for us to put him in
and feed him lunch

Friday, July 4, 2025

Negative

softening takes time
now I've banked lots
the best of a lifetimes
needs hardness / the same
can be said about dry
and wet

Saturday, July 5, 2025

Once More

here's a puzzle easy to solve
why love a woman you never
want to touch / if you can answer
that you've taken one step
toward proving you're human

Sunday, July 6, 2025

Near Joppa

once I sat in a second floor
restaurant at a table looking
out over Merrimack River
across from me a woman whose
clothing looked half off
ready for bed / her hair
as much cover as her knitted
top draping off shoulder
but the tide was just coming
in and the tethered sail boats
were turning toward the sea
I turned too

Monday, July 7, 2025

Praise Of A Flat

every night I'd wonder
how I could find a life
I liked and usually
nothing came to mind
I was always in my head
still am / I wonder now
how anyone could believe
I answered their prayers

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Meredith

what trace of me's left
in Martin's house still
standing a replica of itself
how Martin kept her away
from me even when nothing
could have happened and
everyone knew it / I
still write her name

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

Tubes

he was a silly builder
but he did everything himself
sometimes with methods
he invented and tools
he designed and fabricated
he always experimented
a often left the failures
in place / his best
idea was using tire tubes
as connectors and joiners
everyone noticed

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Parke Mathematical Laboratories

my first job
code math in fortran
code OS in assembler
help the librarians
add salt pellets to the water softener
mow the lawn
program a trigger guard
cutter delta list
hand deliver results to Hanscom Field
code up a stonewall line
drawing program for surveyors
discover frappes

Friday, July 11, 2025

Newburyport

the women walk this way and that
in the square the webcam back
near home shows me / lower left
are umbrellaed outdoor tables
up and down the aisles women walk
because some are beautiful
I wonder how their lives
will age under their stewardship

Saturday, July 12, 2025

Looking Bad

the point of living hidden
is to never need to explain
to never need to apologize
to never need to look good

Sunday, July 13, 2025

Age or Wisdom

ideas come quick
but new ones and revisions
pile up / especially when
programming / I keep refining
extending / adding new
sometimes better things
I test ideas / sometimes
I'm surprised / was I
always like this

Monday, July 14, 2025

Cook

my mother was a lousy cook
plus she cooked one meal
for me and one for the two
of them / burgers / spaghetti
stuffed cabbage / steak
chops / chicken / that's
it I think

Tuesday, July 15, 2025

Tracy Died

the song of sadness
never stops playing
whoever hears it suffers
sudden tragedy / sometimes
it's apparent / sometimes afar
and the fallout falls out
when unexpected

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

Scrunch

is the face in agony
or the face in joy
because of impetus
or is it a reaction
even if the music
is made by the owner
of that face / duende
foretells the answer

Thursday, July 17, 2025

Why Care

always too focused on self
I lost as many friends
as I made / and few of them
would want to undo that

Friday, July 18, 2025

Jazz Bones

I am tired of explaining
the simple and obvious
to people who want to believe
their own mistakes
I'd rather listen to jazz
in a realist soundstage
and write the day inside out

Saturday, July 19, 2025

It

I'd drive in early to get
a parking space then
I'd sleep in the back seat
for two hours then eat
the sandwiches my mother
made / I'd walk through
the tunnels to the cafeteria
to meet friends / I hated
it

Sunday, July 20, 2025

Pathways

will I once more
walk from the farm
to the square / will
the overdeveloped
land know me
I imagine paths
I once walked some
every day won't
remember the love
of it

Monday, July 21, 2025

Thin Dark Brows

she sat there
eating her Italian meal
outside under the Campari
umbrella / ordering dessert
I find I'm drawn to eyebrows
now that nothing else about
women gets under my skin

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

Bring Around Dawn

fog and dead calm
distant lights streaking
impressionism across the harbor
I suppose I once wished
her to stand by me there
now it's just a place
no matter how many ships
carve by / she decided
the best way was no way

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

Back

chicken coops / wood peg
barn / cold-water milk shed
a few electric fences for cows
an orchard of pears and a few
apples and cherries
grapes growing wild on trees
around the big field
if only I still had it

Thursday, July 24, 2025

After Storming Winter

after we mistook
fresh leaves for fog
and apple blossoms behind
the shed for woodsmoke
she pingponged from window
to window instead of folding
herself by the bed and later
she left without packing

Friday, July 25, 2025

Dying To Music

brittle / all is
I hope to pass
while listening
to music / I do
everything else
that way

Saturday, July 26, 2025

Lots Of Ferries

the door slammed again
her eyes blinking in bright
glare / she wanted to depart
the ferry was leaving in two hours
I was ready for her to go
only the wind could disagree
why should it

Sunday, July 27, 2025

Lost Highway

in the song the word
dreams lands on a minor
chord and to me resolves
to a major / the woman's
stiletto voice is now
pure flats

Monday, July 28, 2025

And Her Too

ships love the blue
water in one direction
the sky another
and not to be missed
the blue of night
in a cold wet place
in the middle of a
dark night

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

Now

I wanted to be special
now I'm just another man
awaiting the only sure
thing in life / all
I can do is write about it

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Bad Schedule

three days in a row
of medical tests
exams / probes
little road bumps
of fear that I'd learn
the timetable of my
you know

Thursday, July 31, 2025

Minders

my mind is at ease
my mind is made up
I mind the gap in your favors
do you mind me taking you to me
my mind is empty
my mind carries the weight of dreams
smoke through broken windows

Friday, August 1, 2025

Bridge Street Cemetery

I stopped at the cemetery
Bridge Street on the way
to Meredith's / I wasn't
going to visit her
technically
but it's why I was going
while at the cemetery I
planned a novel or maybe
a long short story
and I charted symbols
and all that but the world
is lucky I never got
farther / Meredith too

Saturday, August 2, 2025

Young

the fruits of youth
especially art
crush those of age
the same for me?
the man waiting to greet
me snickers

Sunday, August 3, 2025

Later?

so who cares what
I've ever done and
if made a difference
maybe those others
believed it themselves
the agents / if I'm
invisible now
just think

Monday, August 4, 2025

S Cottage Grove

the tiny house on S Cottage Grove
my office here at home just
a little bigger
it was a portend of what I'd be
late in life after everyone forgot
to thank me

Tuesday, August 5, 2025

Deep Hole Not Much Water

when were digging the well
by hand in Tamworth my job
was to pull the rope over the pulley
to raise the post hole digger
and while I did that one time
after another from early morning
to mid twilight what went through my head
was Walk Away Renee / time / place
mood

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

World Under A Light

behind the little clearing
I built the teepee in / with
the granite stone plastered
into the ground was the 10
foot wide little pond made
of water at the water table
and the nice microscope
they got me one Christmas
revealed what life means

Thursday, August 7, 2025

Nearsighted

just looking one day ahead
or two / I had no plan
just reaction / no plans
only reactions / where
did I end up / middle
of the pack / I guess
but I was known / well

Friday, August 8, 2025

Market Square Restaurant

around the outdoor tables
people chat / chomp / change
their postures and like pigeons
peck & peck as if what
's right in front of them
's all that matters and instead
are we in a black hole
what the fuck is going on

Saturday, August 9, 2025

Luckiness

on my way to the coast
I ran across a woman
who had just made
shepherd's bread and we
sat on a boulder spreading
jam on some slices because
everyone knows I always
pack it when the chance
of a chance meeting
with a woman on a cold
day is as likely as anything
even the hope of a hand
in my hand

Sunday, August 10, 2025

Fritz T

reading about and watching
documentaries on 1930s & 1940s
Germany is like reading
a script in use today
where the saying everyone
matters or no one does
is acted on with the second
choice the first

Monday, August 11, 2025

Jimmy

was he deaf or damaged
was he backward or harmed
did someone blow his
circumcision / did he commit
crimes or only unlucky
I remember telling him
hike-en-em bike-en-em
when he played football
toy guns behind the stone
wall / he was my first friend
and how did that end up

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

News

walking home from my hilly walk
I passed an old man sweeping
leaves by the curb and I thought
I knew him from his alzheimer talks
as I passed he looked up and
said I've got cancer in my right leg
they say it might travel to my left
might do me in / they're working
on it / for now I'm helping this
lady here / I said comforting things
then walked the rest of the way
home

Wednesday, August 13, 2025

Imagining

I can't escape being called
a computer programmer / even
that confounded bitbrain
chatgpt insists I'm one
despite never making a dime
from a program I wrote / it
you write programs don't
you

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Match Compiler

fixing a program written
decades ago / I wrote it
but I created errors
I didn't test it well
or thoroughly / been
at it for days / more
to test

Friday, August 15, 2025

D'J

some love the all ways
cruelty feels like fun
they've been holding it back
for decades and now criminals
are cool

Saturday, August 16, 2025

General Relativity

not one you'd think'd
become a motorhead yet
he spends a thousand
or two on a weird
mirror wax job on his
anniversary Mustang
he runs pipes on it
he likes to accelerate
the way only Einstein
could imagine
(and he did)

Sunday, August 17, 2025

Kurkjian To' Me

my high school
has a hall of fame award
someone says I should get one
I say give it a rest

Monday, August 18, 2025

Dog in Woods

nights in summer
Snooks would rouse herself
cautiously push her dog door
open then head into the woods
barking and I hear her voice
dissipate and fade in the leaves
and all other softnesses in our woods
in the morning she'd be back
on her bed of old blankets
and the fuss would have faded
and dissipated / what
did she hear

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Paradise, I Surmise

funny how no matter how
confused I get programming
a short walk seems to reveal
the problem / where has my mind
gone

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Ron

every step in my career
he helped / every step
in my musical life he
stood nearby / he was
smart / ugly / an towering
ego / he smelled bad
he never worked well
with women / he even
fed my dogs while I was gone
he is

Thursday, August 21, 2025

Rogers Funeral Home, Haverhill

instead of being able to stand
beside her final box
touch the backs of her hands
folded by effort over her heart
smell the oldness trapped
in the ugliest type of room
ever invented / instead
of hearing voices shucking words
redstained in the opposite way
I was locked in the car
across the street / down the street
from one beginning to one ending
because after all I was unfit
for life as mother knew of it

Friday, August 22, 2025

Plum

my mother
in the future
likes lounging on Plum Island
first for the fried clams
second for the waves small
though they were and still be
a question is what about the Pink House
in the marshland off the road
from Newburyport / from the time
distance I can picture her better
at Salisbury Beach / but I drift
to that Pink House / whether she
admired it / or just the fried clams
across the road / she couldn't imagine
me even after birth

Saturday, August 23, 2025

Screenshot

after a while you can stumble
on beauty but you need to grab
a screenshot otherwise how will
you ever know you found it

Sunday, August 24, 2025

Hacker

pissing over my old code
from the 1970s I'm dumbfounded
by how poor a programmer
I was / I wonder whether now
I'm better or just lousy
in wonderful new ways
but the code works

Monday, August 25, 2025

2025–2029

toxic empathy
benevolent cruelty
retribution
vengeance
and all this makes many
like me
fear for our lives

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Till Death

my mother / her mother
hate bonded them / I
never knew the reason
they never stopped
screeching at each
other while Nana was alive
some might say it normalized
hate for me / little
did I know the reason was a killing
the secret kept from everyone
and I mean everyone for seventy
years / mothers in arms

Wednesday, August 27, 2025

Long Futures

what'll happen when
my memories are dissolved
into mush / when decay
wins / will it be as if
nothing happened
as if the little stream
behind our house
was in a story / not
in the world / as if
what I took for embraces
were as needles under a tree
the cool wind coming in in
summer as I pretended she
might be

Thursday, August 28, 2025

PR

my ambition was to play
for the remainder
to play while listening
to music / all the time
I rarely earned what I was paid
my main contribution was as
the tail feathers on the peacock
any company that could afford
someone like me who was only for show
certainly was doing well
I was PR

Friday, August 29, 2025

2025

(loop for i
from 1 to 9 sum
(* i i i))

Saturday, August 30, 2025

Cared

the river doesn't care
leaves and grasses
like timothy or rye
don't either / guess
how much the pines
oaks and maples care
the waves near shore
come down to it
no one I know cares
either
whether a single thing you do
makes for happiness or
even just surviving

Sunday, August 31, 2025

Alone At Night

when they left I'd
take a steak out of the freezer
if early enough I'd put it out
if not I'd put it in warm water
then I'd broil it with butter
watch a movie and make up some
nutty dessert / then I'd leave
the lights on and sleep with the biggest
knife in the house / hunger
fear

Monday, September 1, 2025

Twelve Pages of Diary

written like a diary in September 1967
it reads like angst looking for death
as I could not find a way to encourage
someone to pay love attention
the grip of fear looked on the page
like cynic drunk on skepticism
reading it when I was 50 I perfected
cringing

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Always Cold

the taxi arrived at 3:55
Market Cross / waiting in sodium
yellow / I watched from four
thousand miles away for three
and a half minutes until the short
haired woman thin in slacks came
out her door off Mounthooly
and made her thin way to the front
passenger door and off they went up
Commercial / does it make sense
for me to love her

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Debris

abandoned houses
abandoned homes
even of stone they fall
on Shetland / on cliff
shelves in NM / Utah
left behind only what
perseveres / broken pots
even can make their way
to us / carving order
from other order the people
who built them probably
wondered too

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Croft Life

standing in front of the broken
down croft just up from a hellstorm
cliff I started to count the stones
still holding in place / I saw more
in place than slowly folding
into the peat / my eyes watered
while my imagination put me
and her into this croft a hundred
years ago where we lived as one
till death did us part

Friday, September 5, 2025

Frozen In Place

I would stand in front of the phone
in the cold room where the piano sat
I never could call her and smart
that I didn't / bad enough to have
no love but better that than humiliation

Saturday, September 6, 2025

Lost Again

she took out her hearing aids
today / it took us hours to find them
we still haven't been able to make
her understand that it was her hearing
aids and that she took them out
and put them somewhere / she kept
asking what are you looking for
maybe get a bullhorn instead

Sunday, September 7, 2025

Appetite

even with all the extremes
I've done now that I no
longer can I still want
more

Monday, September 8, 2025

And So

a lengthy trip with a new
woman except we were nothing
but the trip her idea
we stayed next to each other
for two weeks and never
a word or motion of affection
actually hardly any recognition

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

Christ In The Desert

I went a couple times into the chapel
to listen to the chants at the monastery
she chose and made me drive my car to
down a 13-mile dirt road but she didn't
said she didn't believe in the Christ
Our Lord thing / she liked the silence
and the monk-cell-size sleeping rooms
I should have known then she was working
up to full-on hate

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Never Come Back

finding a way to live
away from everyone
just listen to music
all day on a system
that tells me everything
about the recording
maybe I'll close my eyes
to listen / doze away
never come back

Thursday, September 11, 2025

Loft

the strangeness of place
combines with foggy thinking
to turn inert material
to unmakeable unusuals

Friday, September 12, 2025

The Knocks

in a different timeline
today would be important
because of a birth three
quarters of a century
ago / instead there's a light
knock on my door / one like one
I heard one group of decades
ago / one like one I heard
a different group of decades
ago / one like one someone
will hear soon but I won't

Saturday, September 13, 2025

In Market Square

why would anyone pause
when I pass / now that
no one sees me I seen
as invisible / others
find I answer too slow
answer with flaws
but no one pauses
I stand wobbly

Sunday, September 14, 2025

What's Wrong

I constantly remember
the mistakes and stupidities
that tagged along beside my life
people can see me pound my thighs
or hear me mutter what's wrong
with me / I wish I could have noticed
these sooner

Monday, September 15, 2025

Cooped

coops all over our land
two large ones for commerce
a smaller one for pullets
then two in a scatter behind
our house across the road
I saw only the scattered ones
with chickens / commerce
and scale long abandoned
and later I planned to turn
the pullet house to a clubhouse
but like most things I plan
I quit partway through

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

And That

I thought about apologizing
for being a little too
but I wondered whether she was
worth it / I mean / she made
the moves a normal woman would
but later claimed I was not
on base / so far I've not
she is alive fully despite
this

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

November Trip

I overcame fear today
and bought a plane ticket
to Boston / I used to eat
these trips for snacks
when I had less

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Poynt For Instance

when I was alone each night
when dinnertime came
I'd find a place
that would make for a good
date meal / but alone I'd
order the meal a good date
might and read a book perhaps
one I just bought down the street
and I'd rotate between reading
eating / watching the diners
and servers for signs of hidden
passion

Friday, September 19, 2025

Drinkers

when I visit a crpft
fallen to pieces by a voe
especially when a rusty
plough's nearby I worry
about the women who lived
there / how they could make
do with only peat and coley
ling / whiting / plaice
not to mention the men
drinking in rehearsal
for Up Helly Aa

Saturday, September 20, 2025

Misguided Search

watching for the sun
smell of oily soil near
instead of a bright sun
it's a stiff gale
where I sit becomes untethered
if there was a woman nearby
I never figured it out
the wind always wins

Sunday, September 21, 2025

Definition Of Beauty

the road is a spline
up a valley made for no
reason but we join in praise
of its perfection or rather
the perfection of the road's
curves almost the same
as the backside curve of a woman
no one deserves

Monday, September 22, 2025

Talking Around

the mechanisms of speech
need constant work to keep
them working and warmed up
same with the mechanisms
of writing but I keep
them in good shape better
will I one day need to use
one to brace up the other

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Cambridge

someone who helped me
with tasks she had zero
interest in for a few years
went on to research and teach
her love / a topic so strange
and different I can't even
think the first thought about it
at a university I am not qualified
to even give a brief talk at

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

Out To

men at sea rowing
hard over under currents
returning home counting
the strokes / the strokes
they plan for women
or counting the roofs that will need
rethatching after summer mist
ends

Thursday, September 25, 2025

Flower Time

kids on their way to school
dead winter / their bare feet
how sad / squelched and squeaked
on peat / not important the scones
they ate along with way
the kids just older flew out
the way terns do / as puffins do
if you're looking for flowers
picked for occasions look to graves
not to brides

Friday, September 26, 2025

Tingwall

a pistol filled with stones
shot into the bedroom
of a love rival / hidden
behind stones in a croft
the shooter spent time locked up
simple small wounds
all this for the love of a girl

Saturday, September 27, 2025

Salt And Honey

carrying a knife
harrowing ground
staring toward the sea
the crofts unlived in
for a century / then
some would sing a tune
or play a tune / others
would mourn

Sunday, September 28, 2025

Circles; Squares

with these stones
I can build a broch
a well / a place to store oats
something round if I place
things right / with these stones
I can build a croft / a pen
a wall around every part
of life that matters / a church
even a stone to place a grave
into your memory

Monday, September 29, 2025

Red Barn And Poor

my father set quartz in the northeast wall
a beacon for cod fishers to reach landfall
my uncle never made it in spite
my cousin's wife died giving birth
the sight of beautiful land and sea
does not feed the hungry / we have little
no / make that nothing / only a marriage
now and then / or a baby now and then
give us reason to love the quartz

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Pund

many deaths and some births
a croft long gone to flames
it has seen it all for centuries
now just a discarded place
or overexposed photo or
overdue video / click like!
and subscribe

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

West Voe

in a time when there was no
wood we'd scour the shore
for driftwood / not willing
to sequence work we'd batten
our clothes and let the waves
wash over them / sometimes
overwash them

Thursday, October 2, 2025

Paradise

who built the first croft
plowed the first field
finding heat in the peat
where was the first stone
moved from / who was the first
child / who was the first
to see their last sunset
there

Friday, October 3, 2025

Foula

rappelling down cliffs
gathering eggs / grabbing
puffins / cut them along the back
flatten and fry them / can you see
Fair Isle / can you see Orkney
no of course / a stone bench holds
pails of cold water / cormorants
smoked fish / was this home
not for you / for someone

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Bressay

time to worry / listen
for the foghorn
bank up the peat against
the heat stone / gather
the knitting / worry
that hope might fly
up the chimney and southward

Sunday, October 5, 2025

Fladdabister

stones for building
for weighing down thatch
everywhere and peat too
a sun that hesitates all
winter / rain as constant
as wind / these are all
measures of drudgery
of heaven

Monday, October 6, 2025

Stone Hit

working in a mine
he was hit by a stone
on his head / he'd run wild
all night in all directions
till one night he stormed
a croft where he grabbed
a fiddle / playing reel
after reel he at last
blasted out a new one
he went down in history
as the best fiddler
on the west side
and for writing
the best reel

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Before The Factor

sun wading through our oat hill
ponies chewing and lazing
a mill-burn flowing unstoppable
into the inlet / enough hay and oats
for winter / peat enough to feed
and warm / but a man will come
to take it from us / he didn't
work for it

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Cast Away

the best movie ending
the sleek redhead stops
her vintage pickup by Hanks
frumpy dog in the bed
crossroads / you look
lost she says / where ya headed
she asks / he says he's figuring
that out / she describes the four
winds ending with her direction
being a whole lot of nothing
as she leaves he sees her wings
when the world is flat in every
direction take the road
heading to a whole lot of nowhere

Thursday, October 9, 2025

It's All About The Wind

sudden gusts shake the chimney
children in a box bed covered
in quilts and sheeps' wool
smoke from banked peat
no one will visit them that night
nor any other for winter
is upon the land and the wind
rain & cold is not in the mood
for friendly

Friday, October 10, 2025

Tell Stories

stories last as long as storytellers
even with squinting chimneys
and only the echoes of children playing
we take comfort in stories of milk
stones and witch help for exhausted
cows / yellow butter / rich cream
abandoned beds

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Only Bird Song

many coffins took the ride
across the sound on boats
rowed by those not stricken
by the deaths / they tied
off the bow-rope around
the church rock / see
it now / its grooves filled
with lichen and widows' tears
the boat shelter's half collapsed
inside you can see the imprint
of the boat and hear some
echoes

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Under The Brow

over here
stones abound
to for instance
weigh down thatch
ground soft to pound
in stakes / grass
green enough for
katmoget / yuglet
or smirslet sheep
but we'll move on
even from heaven
even from drudgery

Monday, October 13, 2025

Even Forever

we shaved slithers of stones
from the cliffs / we dug
and sowed oats / we carried
whey to quench thirsts
the cornerstones we cut
and placed hinted at forever
nothing is forever

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

The Great Storm of February 1900

storm so psycho
the children in one
flooded house were rescued
when neighbors in a boat
pulled aside the thatch
and snatched them out
wells near the sea
were brackish for months
the word that came to mind
was smithereens

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

News Is Always Bad

it would be nice sometimes
if something could go right
for any stretch of time

Thursday, October 16, 2025

Last Person In The Daal

mist shrouded valley
ice forming on shallow puddles
her island tight in the middle
as if a corset had cinched it
the vacant church / the pauper
house all looked on as the moon
grinned a bow over her smallest
house / she kept her sorrows
to herself / widowed by the heavy seas
her little boys all dead

Friday, October 17, 2025

Peerie Isles

wind whipping from the north
no place to shelter a boat
no beach to dry a catch
but against a hill
enough shelter for a small croft
we have three buried in Papil
and plan to leave / seaweed
carried in back baskets to green
the field / to sweeten the yard
what for?

Saturday, October 18, 2025

From The Isles

there was a day
when the sound of children
chirped as they leaped
across stream / over rock
walls / sailed into barns
behind crubs / women shook
the fresh water from their men's
pants and shirts in hopes
they'd return

Sunday, October 19, 2025

Papa Stour

on a small island
they can see green
in every direction
can see priests
sailing to offer
salvation / can see
Vikings out to name
towns / can fail
to welcome lairds
who want only more
and more / can see
at last the boats
departing with the last
of the children

Monday, October 20, 2025

Lonely Hilltop

she tried many places
to live but settled
on her hilltop
she put away the letters
informing her of death
and instead imagined children
sledding down her hill
even though the snow was rare
and she had forgotten
what hilarity and laughter
were

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

If Only

winter dim / seas
too harsh to get off
winds too strong
for out work
bring in water and peats
mend a sole / make a back
basket / wish for endless
summer

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Foo

someone messed up
my text messages
trying to recover
reminds me of the abandoned
broken crofts on Shetland
and all the emails
I was too afraid to send

Thursday, October 23, 2025

A View

all the stones had been picked
off the hill where the view is vast
sheep could roam everywhere
cows could graze everywhere
but families one by one
moved away some as far
as New Zealand / each
taking a beach stone in pocket
now it's just the two of us
and our dog

Friday, October 24, 2025

Summer Day

her husband's boat is rounding the point
low in water / the boys sprint down the field
to the beach where their hands and arms
will sting from salt spread over the spread
of cod / the cows must wait to be milked
their calves have been slipped from their byre
she makes his meal then waits to warn
him of the low lintel / he will sleep
for a night and more / like a peat

Saturday, October 25, 2025

Hot Mow

my mother driving the tractor
made from Ford truck parts
behind her her mother
on the mower going around the field
counterclockwise cutting the timothy
and occasional snake or mole
midsummer / heat stored in the moist
air mixed with scent of cut hay
they hated each other and would
for decades / all this in my imagination
because I never paid attention

Sunday, October 26, 2025

Competing

the field once mowed and used
for good hay now let to spawn
whatever comes along / the weeds
and wild flowers love it till
they realize it's every plant
for itself

Monday, October 27, 2025

Peabody

born today
maybe 110 years ago
later she'd live on the farm
I grew up loving
somehow it seems
she was not proud
of me or what I accomplished
too far from what she knew
I wasn't so great to her either
I left her alone with her fears
she never knew that I finally
knew her secrets / or some of
them

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Women

codheads and roe
a flitboat filled with peat
a frisky heifer or bales
of wool / baskets full of knitting
we shared the haddock boat
we helped with the scything
we pulled together on the oars
of grief to get to consolation

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

Tingwall

the wrong man was courting
your mother according to the man
courting her before me / he loaded
a pistol with small stones
came after me shooting through my window
the stones scattered and missed
the sheriff arrested the wrong man
it used to be such a peaceful place

Thursday, October 30, 2025

Prayer And Work

she suggested we stay there
Christ in Desert
got us two cells near each other
it's a silence place
on the Chama River in a valley
the monks pray and chant
many times a day / they work
to support the monastery
guests can stay for lots of reasons
some keep it quiet
I wasn't thrilled by the idea
but I was the one who went to Vespers
every day / she thought I was nuts

Friday, October 31, 2025

Ending Word

I started on a day of the same name
my mother said they seemed to swap
me with a girl / after she died
they seemed to swap my mother's
ashes with man / is this what
they mean by a cosmic swap
meet

Saturday, November 1, 2025

Lino

on a stormy night I came in
from the lamb barn wondering
how we'd survive winter
how close to the stove
we'd need to sit
how glad I was to no longer
venture to sea / my wife
put on a kettle and served
oatcakes / upstairs the kids
hearing the gale in the chimney
pulled the quilt to their ears

Sunday, November 2, 2025

Only Bird Song

starlings come round
startle between chimney
and barn / they care little
that there're no roads
or that we cannot plant
because the ground seized up
the only time they rest into stillness
is when the funeral boat
leaves for the churchyard
across the strait

Monday, November 3, 2025

Papa Stour With Her

to Papa Stour with the lady guide
she like me loves graveyards
so we spent hours at a kirk
headstones so old no one could carve
on them / maybe this one was the funniest
person / this the kindest / she guessed
and her guesses became facts
she told me she loved graveyards
because the people in them could never
hurt you / criticize you
asking around no one alive
knew any of their names
just like us one day she said

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

The Long View

their days here are numbered
she makes scones / he stands
at the table / gleaning is postponed
a neighbor nearby brings a mackerel
something about the beauty
brought them here / something
about the desolation / the decay
or the wind shortened their view

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

Life's A Chat

let's start with a cliché
in the book that is my life
now the LLM twist
someone behind other designed
scenes is predicting the next
word / whatever that corresponds to
with the spice of random
thrown in / but like any artist
I don't care about engagement only
estrangement

Thursday, November 6, 2025

Island Girls

from atop a hill I watched
girls going down to the haddock boats
taking lines home to dry
setting hooks / in warm clothes
they helped / other times they'd sing
their knitting folded by the fire
dance on beige beach sand / sly
over rocks / tease sea caves
all to steer blue from sea
to sky / to steer men

Friday, November 7, 2025

Last Wedding

when all was good
men began crewing drifters
other still raised walls
and families / after the laird
lost his grip and the road
went up the brow not
through the town houses
went empty / the last wedding
the sweetened bride / mutton
boiling in pots / girdle
scones baked / she crossed
the distance to the manse
in wellingtons in her hands
her wedding shoes / lights
now doused / byres broken down
geese wintering / nowhere
a cow

Saturday, November 8, 2025

On Your Own

she stood by the sea
bare crags around and out there
staring / sea stacks each with a sea eagle
or a black-back gull / only
them to share the view
what a fine day to have this world
all to yourselves she said / very isolated
in bad weather / or when you've become
old

Sunday, November 9, 2025

The Lord's Prayer

the gale did its thing
haddock boats foundered
the woman who was waiting
her husband gone
her daughter waiting to marry
her promised gone
her children all boys
gone

Monday, November 10, 2025

Nowhere / No One

the man who walked 8 miles
to fetch the crippled modwife
who carried her back through mud
over moor / who sailed around the world
and nixed marriage to a rich widow
who snubbed the thought of gold mines
in Australia / who chose to defend
the laird's sheep and keep them within walls
has been cleared by the factor
this is where nowhere lies

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Day In Tamworth

Tamworth lot hard to access
widening the road forced a berm
with debris / garage door unlocked
with effort but inside it was all
cobwebs and frass / nothing
to save but a typewriter
possible purchasers stopped
by like The Walking Dead

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Driving

everything just a little
too tiring or hurting too
much / worry about whether
I'll get home / the crudl
president wants me to suffer

Thursday, November 13, 2025

Chicks

women in Newburyport
stroll slow and in the way
dress like Paris
sneer like all mine

Friday, November 14, 2025

Down To The Waterline

how many ways can I hurt
the back / the toilet
the names forgotten
the embarrassed comments
I couldn't see everything
on my drive and I'll
never return

Saturday, November 15, 2025

Oh Dear

the christmas tree up and almost decorated
30 feet tall / men adding decorations in a cherry picker
in front of the building the webcam sits on that I watch
Newburyport / I missed it this trip

Sunday, November 16, 2025

Instead Of Selling

some day it will become
long ago that I took my daughter
to see the old Tamworth place
where she remembered the house
that I had to tear down
where the driveway had been blocked
by a berm / where the pines
had started up / where the frass filled
garage held time in its weak poor
hands / and I gave it to her

Monday, November 17, 2025

GB

imagining the feel she
must feel when one man
after another enjoys
her / I decide to write

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Hospice

I chose to spend days
at a house where a woman
I don't know was dying
but she was cogent
she knew why I was there
I was there to help her die
I was there to watch her die
I was there to keep her last
days from loneliness

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Mill Stone Dancing

when there is almost
nothing but stone
from height to shore
the houses will tumble
not rot / when everyone
leaves for town streets
for far islands
for better wives
the roof will celebrate
by falling onto your bed

Thursday, November 20, 2025

Affording Fun

when the snow came
to town covering
every sleddable hill
we vowed to climb
every one / slide
every one / this
was all the orgy
kids could expect
until the waves
came and grew

Friday, November 21, 2025

Thanks To You

walking around the headstone
that will one day mark my place
I feel like a writer writing
the scene of his burial
to be able to experience
what no one does
no one wants

Saturday, November 22, 2025

Firsts

do you ever wonder
who was first
to bound ashore
to turn over a stone
dig a row for seeds
lay down a floor and dance
on it until it gleams
tend to a sea haul
with knives and pans
to love someone so much
a life appears
cut down and dig out
crops and roots
to look west while
the real sun
and the one that's you
fades then sets

Sunday, November 23, 2025

Over A Shoulder

the house started as a croft
just stones set into shapes
to thwart the gales and sea spray
these days they'd have a window
to look out to the small islands
not far offshore / but the wife
who first lived here must have pined
for a chimney and any window looking
out any direction for letting in any
sunlight those times it was out there

Monday, November 24, 2025

Billy Bob

my job
a simple one you'd think
was to set her down at the kitchen table
and give her a good hard
listen to
and when she finally came
to know the future she needed
make it come true

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

Short Line

she had flowers and bushes
in circled plots all through her yard
and every evening in Summer she
my father and I would tour them
she'd point out their progress
or work she'd done on them that morning
plans for improvements / changes
for the next year / a ritual
every day it didn't rain all Summer
and part of Fall / for years
you'd never guess she hated
everyone / especially my father
and me

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Oh Lord

staring at the webcam
showing a town near the town
I grew up in / listening to sad
songs / listening to the song
Quux and I used for the In Memoriam
in 50 In 50 I noticed the keyboard
a tad wet

Thursday, November 27, 2025

Music And Driving

we sat in a circle
around the folk singer
in Amherst / in that circle
a woman listened who one
day after our son was born
would divorce me for not wanting
that boy / one day she drove
away and I cried for hours
in the lap of another
but for then the music
was all we knew
three women and two guitars
their music was all around us
the car turned a corner
at the end of our street
I never saw them again
or so I thought

Friday, November 28, 2025

Cold Hard

what I wanted was a way to get better
bad cold / profound coughing
nose draining / lungs in pain
shivering / cold in a harsh way
tonight I must sleep sitting up
if I want to live

Saturday, November 29, 2025

Market Cross Tree

the tree in Market Cross
when its lights are off
looks like pure greenery
earlier it was sparkles
almost like I saw it
in reverse time
Christmas miracle
or just loneliness
on steroids

Sunday, November 30, 2025

West Of Las Vegas New Mexico

from his compound
to the forlorn stage coach
station was through a field
of holes and cattle pies
it was dry New Mexico
land and air / it was almost
like waiting for the next train
its whistle blowing / bright
horses beyond a horizon
he cooked for us and his women
none of whom loved him anymore
it was his paradise but he didn't
know it then / everything around
felt lonely

Monday, December 1, 2025

For Adults

for Christmas I remained
a child until 16
I asked my mother for a bulldog
tank from Sears and she got me one
a ridiculous gift for my age
but she was fighting my father
for child supremacy and willing
to buy whatever I asked for
you can still find them for
sale on eBay / kids stuff

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Not Again

too many times I've
said or wrote things
that later I felt so bad
about that I withdrew
from friendships to avoid
reminding them what a loser
I had been

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Travel Time

I was always ready for the next trip
to mirror the last trip but as I age
the mirror fades and the resemblance
becomes a mockery the answer of time

Thursday, December 4, 2025

Cold Alone

in winter I was alone
many days / many weeks
all I did was listen to songs
usually the same one or two
over and over and over and
that was when I was young
now that I'm old I'm
doing it again over and

Friday, December 5, 2025

Far From Town

alone over weekends
on the farm / when it got dark
I kept all the lights on
I locked all the doors
I shook all over
in bed I'd put the biggest
knife in the house under my pillow
I don't have this fear any more
but ones just like it

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Best Roads

the best roads lead the worst
of us away / I found one
leading out of Merrimac
I found one leading out
of Champaign / one day
I'll find one out of
Redwood City

Sunday, December 7, 2025

Fair?

a life can take a whole long time
how many millions of decisions
how many dozens of important events
dreams by the bushel and hopes for loves
and gets / but when the time comes
there are only some words
some people gathered around a hole
summary in two or three pages
a final fade that takes only days
maybe one or two will cry for years

Monday, December 8, 2025

Lerwick Romance

spray and wind coming across the pier
two women and I paused by the force
mother and daughter / intending
for a bakery for biscuits and coffee
we're as far north as sense allows
some wonder which I claim
but such unwelcome thoughts don't help
the orange washed night is unhelpful too
beds await

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

O Lord

sitting by a window
by a river's end and near
the sea after the sun's
been left behind / I drag
the past back to present
all I can do is write
the past doesn't get
a say / the present is dark
and slipping into the sea

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

How Stupid Can Someone Be?

in high school I loved a girl
who didn't like my pants
she liked jocks
she went on to a hidden
pregnancy / later married
a dump picker / became
a Jehovah's Witness
for Christmas I thought
about buying her perfume

Thursday, December 11, 2025

This Stupid

cold and snow
didn't matter / I'd
ride my bike the 3 miles
to her house but I'd
pretend to visit her brother
her mother / her father
Huck / everyone knew
it I suppose / except
me

Friday, December 12, 2025

Eye Doctor Fiasco

I won't sleep for days
another physician deciding
to make it hard to go on
what if I can't drive
can't read / can't see
is it worth most of our money
to avoid that

Saturday, December 13, 2025

Still Tired

I sliced my toe last night
spent hours from midnight on
watching Perry Mason in mono
and B&W / part of the fine
for stupidity

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Grey

maybe my fate is to sit
right here listening
to clear music / writing
inconsequential stories
never venturing out
as my body caves into itself
let it slide over me

Monday, December 15, 2025

North Nights With Her

sometimes she decided to burn peat
sometimes she picked up a fiddle
every time it was cold outside
dark outside / windy outside
most times she was chilly to me
even under the covers

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

A Night + Light Snow

while walking down an alley
in New England in winter
I came to a window above
a shadow behind a curtain
a movement to go with it
underneath it all a song
made to drift riverward
upward / far awayward

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

Constantly

riverbank near sundown
river making up its mind
a green bridge nearby and lonely
it's all come down to this
overlooked and ordinary
nothing but music
but so pretty like the times
I'd sit in the cold room
listening to the same thing
for hours

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Hopi, For Example

you'd think with such
a long drive with many
stops we'd find a way
to be friendly but
instead it was always
a word fight or Q&A
session with me in
second place

Friday, December 19, 2025

A Trip To Skip

when we came upon friends
of hers she forgot I was
with her / when dinner
was involved sometimes
she'd ignore my cravings
when asked whether salmon
was ok days before our visit
she never thought I'd
have a different answer from hers
I almost decided to drive back
without her even though 1200 miles
were in the way / she didn't
notice

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Porch Life

from Québec comes a trio
that plays sad songs only
like the times I've been loved
their slow tempo and her
shallow voice help the darkness
feel welcoming / it helps
that the few tubes the music
comes through throw a wide
rich stage / reminds me
of the porch she never sat
with me on

Sunday, December 21, 2025

Some Win, Some Lose

52 years ago I married
my friend did too
but I married one of his girlfriends
he married another of them
he didn't like that
he married on the 22nd
I on the 23rd
it was fun to see which friends
went to which wedding
or both
he's still married to her
not me

Monday, December 22, 2025

Piano Unmanned

in a cold room playing
a piano just barely in tune
once I thought I was good
my tempo was poor
mistakes abounded
but cold room reverberated
what I could manage
I knew no idioms
I naturally played no classical
playing every night but
I was not disciplined
after a few dozen years
I gave it up

Tuesday, December 23, 2025

Marrying Kind Of

52 years ago for me
two priests / kneeling
before them / my father
fumbling on an organ
in her high school
chapel not much different
from a convent / I had promised
a priest in Illinois there was a chance
I could convert / seemed great
until she down away in some April
seven years later

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Perfection In Strange Places

the sounds of a piano's mechanism
the drop of a sheet of music
a phone ringing in a club
fingers / of course / scratching
guitar strings / lips pulling apart
these imperfections are some of the ways
we know people were on the other side
of the microphones

Thursday, December 25, 2025

Paradise

not a good day
possible damage
to my prized speakers
drainage problems
during supper
a mess to clean
up / this is worst
case for me / I
spook easily

Friday, December 26, 2025

Aloneness

I remember being evil
a natural outcome of youngness
a lonely family
far from everyone
that I think I'm over it now
is a statement of fact
hope or faith

Saturday, December 27, 2025

Snow Night

shoveling snow for hours
making a path then a driveway
later I wrapped my legs in wool
blankets then under a down thing
the weight of the snow
the heat of the sleeptime
all far away

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Drone

sometimes when the future
feels far off the little
bits of perfection feel
optional / when the past
feels far off those lost
bits of perfection feel
essential

Monday, December 29, 2025

Numb

lots of ways to sit
by the river on a Summer
afternoon / all involve
looking at water going
one way then another
letting the breezes in
through open windows
closing eyes for minutes
or hours / pretending the sky
cares about you and your life
listening to cars jolt
the bridge's joints
finally wondering about who
else has been right here

Tuesday, December 30, 2025

By The River

alone in Brown Sugar by the Sea
eating soup and pad thai / across
from me luscious woman reading
a book on Hegel / I considered
a pass but passed / she ordered
as I did Thai iced coffee / I
shouldn't have written luscious

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Ritual of Unknown Meaning

around the Christmas tree
in Market Square a minute
before year's end a couple
walked up to the tree in rain
he held his phone I think
to see the time of renewal
come upon them and because
they were early and maybe
because it was cold and wet
they kept walking around the tree
until the clock was all zeroes
then they stopped on the far side
staying for a full minute
doing something couples do
at last they came round again
and headed down toward Victoria
Pier where the coldest water
awaited