Ballad of Reason the Madman
A Book of Poetry
by
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Ballad of Reason the Madman I - Existentialism

"Come out, come out, wherever you are!"
I wait for them to sound;
I've played a game of hide and seek
Wherein I was not found.

I am the dog who chased its tail;
My life is meaningless.
Who thinks a thought then thinks aloud,
"I wonder whose it is?"

How can I lie about myself
If I don't know the truth?
I'll stake a claim at certainty
With ignorance as proof.

I've strived for the authentic such
That I offend myself.
I'm like an extra puzzle piece;
A hazard to my health.

I could have been a hero but
I showed a bit too late.
I ruined my life on purpose 'cause
I had some qualms with fate.

I gave up Heaven's comforts just
To walk through Hell a mile.
I am the itch that God would scratch
If it were worth his while.

I'm like the thing that doesn't fit
And wakes you from your dreams;
A monster who can't stop himself
From eating all his friends.

I'm something like a lab-grown beast -
The first of its own kind;
There's none to give me answers and
No precedents to guide.

There was a pet I crushed to death
While giving it a hug.
I've touched the wings of butterflies
And mangled all I've loved.

I am an awkward cuckoo bird
Born in the nest of man.
If life were tag, they made me "it"
Then everybody ran.
Ballad of Reason the Madman I - Existentialism Cont...

I found myself with nothing then
I threw it all away.
My curse is normal vision now;
I see through empty space.

The gypsy said my fortune was
To have my nothing back.
The painter said my portrait was
A canvas painted black.

I watched a blind man watching me -
So there's my looking-glass!
There lies the many answers for
The questions never asked.

There is a place where nothing sits
Surrounded by my flesh.
That is the place where something hurts;
A phantom self perhaps.

I broke the straps that held my mask;
Behind it was a hole.
Since then I have been searching for
The man who stole my soul.

And maybe there's no middle though
I stand upon the edge.
What if there is no center and
This hole is all there is?

My self is just the other that
I've set out to become;
See, I'm the secret I would keep
If I knew what it was.

There's no such thing as actors in
This Land of Make-Believe,
Where all the footprints vanish and
The normal ones are freaks.

Doc put a Band-Aid on my brain
Then said, "Nothing is well;
Your mind's a house of mirrors where
No one has ever dwelt."

I stood between those mirrors and
I couldn't find my head,
So I searched through my prosthetics
And screwed one on instead.
Ballad of Reason the Madman I - Existentialism Cont...

I jumped inside a magic hat
And then I disappeared.
Since then I've been invisible;
A scream lost unto ears.

You say that there are other minds,
But maybe there's just me.
And I'm not sure just what it means
To have identity...

Doc said, "You'll have an afterlife!
I've split your brain in two
And put half into that body.
Now meet the other you..."

How can I choose which one I am?
Well, maybe I am both.
That guy has got my character,
My memories and thoughts.

The idiot has steered us wrong;
He thinks therefore he is?
We are what we perceive and feel -
The play of our senses.

We've seen the peel, the pulp and rind;
We've even seen the seeds.
And still we ask, "Where is the orange?
The part that makes up 'me'?"

Since reason is a madman's dream,
I'll live illogically.
Seems to me a sound reply to
Irrationality.

How I love abusing language;
Doing violence to words!
I choke the Muse 'till she turns blue
And reason seems absurd.

You'd know of life and purpose, yes?
There's flightless birds with wings.
I'm like a deaf man hollering;
Don't ask me what it means.
If the world is full of evil
And endless suffering,
How can you say its authorship
Was good and all-loving?

"Well, maybe God would like to help
But he is impotent,
Or maybe he just doesn't know
About the pain we're in."

Or maybe God's all-powerful
And knows about our grief,
But he's indifferent to our pain;
Won't grant us his relief...

Suppose a man withheld his hand
And watched a child drown;
How could we say that he is good
If no risk could be found?

"How dare you judge the mighty God?
Your hubris is a shame!"
I judge him bad, you judge him good,
But judge him just the same.

"Things are good because God says so!"
Then plainly he's not good.
And maybe he will change the law
If murder fits his mood.

"Okay, okay, you've got me there.
God says so 'cause it's good."
Then good is good without your God;
The standard's always stood.

"Man's moral judgement is corrupt!
I'll put my trust in God."
Well, if you think your judgement stinks,
I'll trust your trust is wrong.

"My God is pure and virtuous."
And yet he must know sin;
Not only what it's like to lust,
But also to give in.

"How do you explain miracles,
If not by means of God?"
Perhaps a worm or unicorn
Would better suit your cause...
Ballad of Reason the Madman II - On God Cont...

Advantage is that worms exist -
A hard fact to deny.
A unicorn's a horse with horn,
While God is undefined.

And if it's true that God foreknew
What all of us would do,
Why would he make a Lucifer
From all whom he could choose?

"It's obvious free will exists
And here's the reason why:
Would God not see automatons
As sycophantic lies?"

Suppose I grant the will is free,
Would you not be to blame
If you'd foreseen and still conceived
A genocidal babe?

"But don't you know we're saved by faith
And you'll be damned by doubt?"
Try altering beliefs by will
And see how it pans out...

Try to believe in faeries then
Convince yourself you're wrong.
No torture nor reward could hope
To make your will that strong.

Why would your God reward you for
Something beyond your will?
Or damn me for your failure to
Convince me he is real?

"The world, I cry, displays design -
An ordered harmony."
Hipbones on whales and panda's thumbs
Propound the contrary.

And what is more, sadists adore
The wanton cruelty
Epitomized by pepsis wasps,
Parasites and disease.

"How could the mind or human eye
Result from randomness?"
Someone always wins the lotto;
Does that mean it is fixed?
"The perfect being can be conceived 
And therefore he exists."
Take goblins, trolls and faeries then
And add them to the list.

"If usefulness is truthfulness, 
Religion must be true."
Inquisitors and holy wars
Debunk that theory too.

"The universe has motion and 
Its native state is rest. 
There's nothing that can move itself; 
God gave it impetus."

It's just as hard to stop as start; 
Observe intertial law. 
A native state of motion is 
Equally probable.

"I tell you, time must have a cause!" 
It's logic you neglect; 
For any cause must act in time 
Before its own effect.

"Though everything must have a cause, 
Or there'd be no effects, 
A causal chain must have an end - 
A ground on which to rest."

The universe is naught but parts 
And each of them was caused. 
Existence rests upon effects; 
So tell me, what caused God?

Suppose there was an unmoved caused, 
Why limit it to one? 
And why not God as retarded 
Or evil next to none?

And often causes do not last 
Beyond their own effects. 
So maybe God was such a cause 
And this is all that's left.

You think that you could guess the cause 
If you knew the effect? 
Take experience from genius and 
I swear she'll never guess...
Could you deduce the acorn if
Presented with a tree?
What expertise have you or I
In universe building?

"I know that he's omnipotent."
Let's put that to the test...
Could he create a thing so swift
Not even he could catch?

He can't do evil if he's good;
Can't walk without some feet;
Can't start something without a cause,
Nor make me act freely.

Must God submit when he predicts
The things that he will do?
"My God is not a prescient slave,
Nor limited like you."

And yet he can't deliberate.
The song's already sung.
His prescience has determined him -
"What if he proves it wrong?"

You'll rob your God of foreknowledge
So that he might be free?
"I'd rather that than worship at
The church of a machine."

His lack of freedom bothers you,
Not that he is depraved?
"The afterlife will balance this.
To Heaven with the saved!"

...And to Hell with all the sinners;
The balance is restored.
What kind of cosmic tyrant plans
For eternal torture?

"I know the seat of consciousness
Exists within the soul."
Your mind's a function of your brain;
A spinning of the spool.

"I know the soul has memories."
Then you believe this lie:
That people plagued with Alzheimer's
Get better when they die.
Ballad of Reason the Madman II - On God Cont...

And what of H. Erectus and
The old Neanderthal?
Were they condemned to burn in Hell?
Just when did souls evolve?

"But what of life and purpose in
A world without a God?"
Suppose a dragon bred you for
Nothing more than grub...

Do you suppose your luscious role
Would make life meaningful?
Maybe for him, but not for you,
Unless you are a fool.

"I'll wager this: that God exists
And either way I win!"
In Heaven's News: All gamblers lose
And atheists get in.
Ballad of Reason the Madman III - Wonderings

And from the mouth of madness...words
Like rainbow geysers gush.
The Vomiting Muse sprays her plumes
Of mist on soul canvas...

Wherefrom I've seen, like flies unwinged,
Kaleidoscopic pain.
I sew up hymn's aborted limbs -
The poet's unborn babes...

The soundless words, the pulseless verse,
A face without a face;
The minstrel's loom - a barren womb -
The room without a place.

I eat the seeds within each seed
Then wait for them to grow
And sift through thoughts as yet unthunk
Then wonder where they go.

I bound the hands of time and then
I hid him from himself.
Betwixt the folds of space he waits,
Where ever's never felt.

I saw my brain outside its cage
And struck it with a bat.
The sounds you hear upon your ear
Are echoes of that splat.

The honeyed fruit of madness dripped
As slobber from my mouth,
Like slow-tar streams of dangling dreams
That dribbled all about...

One grew so large its borders merged;
No limits to define.
Its infinite could not exist;
No shape, no place, no time...

I watched it crawl where large meets small;
Where sound and silence meld.
It turned a key within its being
Then climbed inside itself.

I practiced all day long so that
I'd finally get it wrong.
When mastered, imperfection is
As perfect as it comes.
I've walked behind parallel lines
And seen where they cross ways.
That nowhere is just somewhere when
Nothing has lost its place...

The Crossroads of Infinity!
Where difference is the same;
Where entrance through the exit door
Will leave you as you came.

Has beauty moral value and
Does ugliness so lack?
If so, then maybe you would spare
A Rembrandt from the draft.

There was an evil genius who
Invented wicked creeds.
The wiseman said he thanked him for
Creating wholesome deeds.

If there's no place with nothing then
This something can not be;
But everything is something of
A different density.

If being is the subject that
Objectified itself;
We're conscious of our consciousness
And that excludes all else.

The world's like magic gone awry;
A mangled mystic song.
I treat myself unjustly just
To see if I do wrong.

So, maybe when we're born we die
And when we die we're born.
And maybe time is cyclical -
Each moment evermore.

I've told the truth and done some harm
Then lied to ease the pain.
Has truth-telling intrinsic worth,
Or should we seek the ends?

I broke the rules that I might see
The stuff that was inside...
They're like those plastic bubble things;
The ones with no surprise.
I've wondered if my memories
Are only minutes old;
The "aging" world a clever ploy
To see that I am fooled.

And maybe I am just a brain
Inside a wizard's vat,
Thinking as I'm supposed to think
Each time that I am zapped.

That doesn't really matter if
You think pragmatically,
But think on life and purpose in
A happiness machine...

What if we were to lie there and
We smiled until we died?
Have we fulfilled life's purpose and
Attained the perfect life?

And maybe all the universe
Inflates as time rolls on.
We wouldn't even know it if
We too grew right along.

I've wondered if a blind man sees
Amidst a vivid dream,
And even if a deaf man hears
At night while he's asleep.

If immortals walked forever,
Do you think they'd find a way
To walk the breadth of evermore -
Across infinite space?

I don't know why I make these keys
For which there are no locks.
I think that I'm unravelling
King Gordius' knot.

The only thing worth knowing is
That nothing can be known.
We are all like snails wandering,
In search of this: our homes.
Let's watch as Reason socks himself
Into oblivion.
How is a fight decided if
The victor does not win?

"You'll never die!" the Madman lied.
"Before the day you pass,
You must get halfway to that time,
Then half of half of half..."

You should ignore this verse and then
Ignore all of the rest.
If you'd follow my instructions,
Do not do as I've said.

I have always known the Madman,
But who's behind that mask?
Unknown to me, the masked man is
The man I mentioned last.

Do you still have something if it
Has not ever been lost?
Well then, my friend, you must still have
That thing you never got.

The Madman punches all who have
Refused to punch themselves,
But never punches any who
Agree to punch themselves...

That works just fine until the time
The mirror speaks his name.
What should he do? He can't refuse
Then treat himself the same.

Beliefs are only justified
By justified beliefs.
Neither circles nor endless chains
Accomplishes this feat.

God commanded me to disobey.
He did it 'cause he knew
That if I do his will, I don't;
And do not if I do.

Believe me that I'm lying when
I speak these words to you.
But if that's true, it must be false;
If false, it must be true.
Ballad of Reason the Madman IV - Paradoxology Cont...

If it's not wrong for you to do,
Is it okay for me?
"Well, sure," he said. I slapped his head
And then I turned to flee...

I measured out the distance just
To see how far I'd roamed.
Then everyday I walked halfway
And never made it home.

I've been searching for the answers
To questions tied in knots.
Maybe there are no problems and
The search should be called off.
You say that you deliberate;  
I say you are confused.  
You're playing probabilities,  
Then saying that you choose.

A choice? At best, a lucky guess -  
When you think that you see  
Your future's path by guessing at  
Causal trajectories.

You say that you deliberate;  
I say you are confused.  
How can you know what you'll decide,  
If you already do?

How can your future self decide  
A thing already known?  
You can not know what you will do,  
Unless the choice is gone.

Nor can you know a thing you won't  
Until a later time.  
The knowledge that you'll need depends  
On what future provides...

What if somebody interferes,  
You lose resolve with time,  
Or circumstance presents you with  
Something to change your mind?

If some event has happened, then  
It was already true  
That that event would happen and  
Would happen right on queue.

Nothing is ever possible  
Except what is achieved.  
It is not within your power  
To act differently.

You could not have done otherwise,  
Given the causal chain.  
Oh sure, it could be wet outside...  
If only it had rained.

We toy with counterfactuals;  
Let's put those thoughts to rest.  
You can not change a cause without  
Altering the effect...
Ballad of Reason the Madman V - Determinism Cont...

And can not change effects without
First altering the cause.
Thus, changing just one little thing
Would change the universe.

So let's rewind and restart time.
Would you do things the same?
Like causes produce like effects,
So not a thing would change.

You always do just what you will,
But will not what you want...
Suppose you have an ugly wife.
Now choose to think she's not.

You think your thoughts submit to you;
That you are in control?
Then close your eyes. Silence your mind.
It does naught as it's told.

Of two antipodal statements,
Only one can be true.
And statements of future events
Are faithful to this rule...

Today the Madman killed someone,
Just as I did predict.
If you'd denied it, you were wrong.
It seems I was correct...

If it was true when prophesied,
It makes no sense to claim
That when the moment has arrived
The Madman has a say.

It doesn't even matter if
My prediction is tossed.
It's true before it happened that
It would or it would not.

You too are a determinist,
Despite what you may claim.
We all believe that character
Is possible to train...

Some simply call it parenting -
To punish and reward.
We also breed for temperament;
From wolf to labrador.
Our actions result from our wills...
Our wills from our desires...
From motives back to character...
To nature-nurture fires.

A world in which free will exists
Would be a world gone mad!
We could not count on character,
So trust could not be had.

A will not caused by anything
Is nothing but caprice...
A mother who might smother you,
Then feed your corpse some cheese.

Either our will's determined, or
It's subject to pure chance.
Both ways we're not responsible;
We're not moral agents.

Your brain spasms and slips of tongue -
The things that you call choice.
You think you've guessed what you'll do next?
That you have had a voice?

You're the idiot conductor
Who thinks he has a say
While the orchestra ignores him,
Reading music as they play.
If man without a memory
Is man without a self,
Then I'm not me in dreamless sleep
And I'm nobody else.

If Theseus rebuilt his ship
And did it board by board,
When it's complete would it still be
The ship he had before?

And if it's not, then tell me when
It ceased to be the same.
See, a person is no different;
Each moment we are changed.

Suppose I'm just my body and
That there's no more to me...
I guess my self's diminished if
I am an amputee.

Everyday I lie to myself,
Yet somehow I believe
The echo from that yawning gulf -
That space that I call me.

I've no wish to live forever but
I dread the end that's near.
If somehow I remember death,
Then that explains my fear.

Impoverished minds invented souls
For reasons such as this:
We can't conceive a universe
In which we don't exist.

The soul as immaterial?
Outside of space and time?
I see, it's like a square without
The angles or the sides!

Some offer praise to those with faith
Or skeptics who'd deny,
But we can't choose what we believe
And give ourselves new eyes...

Indoctrination's not a choice,
Nor gullibility.
If arguments do not convince,
We don't choose disbelief.
We find ourselves persuaded or
We find that we are not.
If we could believe otherwise,
We would believe as such.

You say that I'm responsible
For all the things I do,
But sometimes I surprise myself
When acting impromptu.

You say that everything is caused -
Yes, everything you've seen.
But in this great wide universe
There is diversity.

Perhaps our dreams are practice for
The waking world we make;
A place where contradicting things
Are woven into fate...

The basis of experience -
A quickening of mind;
So if it's colors you can't see,
That's where your dreams were blind.

You argue wrong; she argues right,
But there's no moral way...
There's what you hate and what she likes;
There's "Ew!" and then there's "Yay!"

You do not like or loathe because
You've found some reason why.
Let's flip the script: Your passions hit
And then you justify.

I've said the things worth saying when
I have not said a word
And I've done nothing worth doing
'Cause life's wholly absurd.

There's no such thing as knowing of
Two differing beliefs,
'Cause if you really understood,
You'd see that they agree.

I turned the ring-thing inside out,
Or was it outside in?
Some say the truth is relative
To where a person stands.
Ballad of Reason the Madman VI - Ramblings Cont...

But maybe they have got it wrong;
The truth remains the same.
Perception becomes different,
So language must be changed.

The truth is like a mirrored gem,
As seen from the inside.
The place you stand determines
The facets that you hide.

I saw a wiseman searching 'cause
He said he'd lost himself.
He tied his thoughts in yogic knots,
Then he began to yell:

"The more you learn, the less you know;
The idiot is sage.
When certain of uncertainty,
Your wisdom is of babes."

He made a leash of loincloth string,
Then put it on a rock.
He told it, "Stay" and it obeyed;
He'd mastered what it was.
"Carnage Rose"

I can see the ebbing throb of my heart in your hands - quivering, pulsing, rocking like some half-formed amphibian cast upon land. There betwixt your teeth its elastic flesh stretching, tearing... tendrils of steam mingling with your moonbright musk. You lick the crimson rivulets that spill from lips with which you growl and I wait; I-WAIT for you where colors go when all the lights are out and I-WOULD-HEAR of this, my gaping breast - oh tell me how I taste - and I-WOULD-SEE with these, my clouded eyes, the poison choke your breath and WE-WOULD-LAY upon the killing ground and speak of this, our love, and I-WOULD-FIGHT the hungry shadows so that I might eat your ghost and I-WOULD-watch the stars fall from your eyes to seed the waiting dark and I-would-give this gift, my dying breath, to mist the carnage rose, while uttering these windless words, "Ah, but this is love."

"The Stain"

My yesteryears growl,  
like Hell-risen hounds,  
that gnaw  
at the meat  
of my dreams.  
I can feel their claws  
scraped inside my skull.  
Is silence  
an unending scream?  
To wake is to bleed  
myself just to feel  
the moment  
when I  
ease the pain.  
I washed myself clean  
and lost everything.  
I suppose  
that I  
was the stain.
"And So..."

We shake the bars of comfort's cage and smash her gilded walls, if only to prove to ourselves that we are, in fact, free; that we are happening to life and that life is not happening to us. Then? Then, my friend, the despondency sets in, for we remain unsure whether or not our little outburst of autonomy was wholly determined. And so... we walk heavily, stomping our feet deep into the earth, seeking some validation that we are, indeed, free agents in a world that would mold us into its own image. We fear loosing ourselves in the crowds that mill about us, herding us this way and that; we fear that we are nothing but wavering stalks of man in the windblown masses of humanity. And so... we scream. We scream loudly, unexpectedly and violently into the collective ear of the faceless ones for no other reason than to watch them turn in shock, offended by our impolitic unpleasantness. "...yes, YES that was me! I am the pebble dropped into your placid pond of well-greased whimperings! I am the cause and not the effect! I am the dreamer and not merely the dreamed!" ...but are we, really? The heavy clouds close again upon our tired little sunbeams and the multitudes turn from us and begin to walk away. We must join them, or be trampled underfoot. And so... we scream. But this time, no one is listening. They have heard it all before.

"Raindrops"

The raindrops are stilled,
suspended in air;
pillars of silence holding
Unstrung beads -
dreams within dreams -
curtains of time billowing open

They part as I pass,
like sorcerous mists,
and gather again behind me

Enter the sound
of a lone hollow wind;
ever were the raindrops falling
"The Stranger"

My lovers are wicked and my rainbows black. 
The bothersome songbirds do naught but scream. 
Each savage breath is of needles and fire 
And my blood is the color of agony.

I have fed to the leeches my memories; 
A small mercy - that I've learned to forget. 
I would have no more of these wishing wars, 
Nor the enemy at the mirror's edge.

I can feel the dark things of oblivion 
Quickening in the wet folds of my mind; 
I can feel the suck of tentacular cups 
Tugging me tenderly through the divide.

Long have I waited for you, my stranger; 
In a whirling vortex of sands we pass. 
My heavy heart falls unto nevermore 
Through the mystic eye of the hourglass.

"That I May"

The sky, that I may plummet through
The sea, that I may drown
A memory, that I may be forgotten
And gravity, to bring me down

A heart, to have loved and lost
A life, that I may die
Words, that I may curse the gods
And eyes, that I may cry

Trust, that I may be betrayed
A promise, to be broke
A perfect silence
 into which
     imperfect words
 were spoke

"Of Love"

I love you yesterday, today and tomorrow;
I love you with every breath and fibre of my being;
I have loved you through worlds long forgotten by gods
And through the dark places yet untouched by their dreams
"A Dying Dream"

Just what do you feed to a dying dream -
To that tail-tucked pet; your joy-whipping beast?
Its pupa-like wings and mantid-like eyes
Drip colors like sun on wax butterflies.

Blue bubbles from rosebud lips float around
Then shatter like Hell's own windows of sound.
Its head is too large to lift anymore,
So you plunged its ears, spilling thoughts on the floor.

About you they flop like fish out of breath
And squish underfoot wherever you step.
Somewhere there are clouds that fall to its screams;
Just what do you feed to a dying dream?

"A Hole in my Brain"

There's a hole in my brain where evil gets in;
Where the curtains slow-dance to underworld winds.
The good things went through it too quickly to catch.
There's a hole in my brain that I just can't patch.

"Mystic Scribbler"

Silver-leaf tendrils
pierce splitting skies;
Child sketched vines
my world entwine

Carbon coils
climb all that I see;
Mystic scribbler,
dream not over me

"The Eater of Things"

I am the eater of things
that fall from your dreams;
the taster of secret letters
I let fly their songs
upon the wings of my words,
then chase their falling feathers

All about me I see
expressions of me
as the Earth, my lover, unfolds
Every movement of hers
are the unformed words
of an everlasting poem
"Sea Birth"

Puddles of shallow champagne light
in spoon-wave hollows lie;
Starsweat in sunken rivulets
trickles down curtains of night

Newflowered dawn and homesick sun,
nest in my cotton-cloud dreams;
Bowerbird of flame, courtship awaits,
where the sky holds up the sea

"Between Your Mirrors"

Though I walk between your mirrors,
I am always pushed to the side
But there in the place where lost memories await
I found your sacred child

The helmet she made
was crooked and strange,
like a football hanging from springs,
Yet of all the crowns
that were ever made,
none was more fit for a king

"And it Was"

And it was to me
as laughter
Warm rains
amidst the sun;
Ever-as-tides
wash over me
Sowing the seeds
of dreams to come

"As Feathers Falling"

How the feathers do fall
from the heavens where once
the wings of our love did soar
And the sandcastles fell
to the tides of our hearts
and the landslides
buried our world

"Eyes of Emptiness"

I have crippled fate and broken hope
And ridden the wings of despair.
I have teetered upon the edge of the world,
Where the forgotten are lost to nowhere.
"Mockeries of Time"

They are the leaves afloat upon eddies of soul;
threadbare skeletons of crestfallen dreams
Stardrift upon winds that taste of old rains
and the ghosts of sunkissed tears
Heavy tides swelled and our sandcastles fell;
do you remember the lay of our world?
Upon my breath, stale cigarettes...
old dreams in the dregs of red wine
Upon beads of cold sweat pale moonbeams rest;
every moment is a mockery of time

"Amber Morning"

Leave me not, amber morning;
be still, the turning sun
Eternal dawn
with my love alone
behind a waking breath
Somewhere there
in the twilight of sleep
I fought to render time undone
But now when failed;
the sands of time
passing through my fingers
And the Keepers of Time
sewed memories
from the fabric of our dreams
One day I woke to find
that she
was lost
to me

"Black December"

The dark flower of my heart is unfolding
In the wintered depths of my soul.
Warm lapping waves of melancholy
Upon the shores of my silence roll.
Salton seas spill from my eyes;
Coming night bleeds from my pores
And the leathered wings of Misery
Gather sadness about my form.
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Dark Dance"

I drink your tears
    as mine have run dry;
Your sadness turns me on.
You lean into my emptiness;
A dark dance has begun.

I cut your heart that I might be
The one to lick your wounds.
You feed upon my sympathy;
I beg of you a boon...

Oh help me mount my cross;
I'll help you mount your shame.
Help me forget once again
By nails and scarlet rain.

Together we'll build a castle of dreams
And a temple made of lies.
Upon the feathers of fallen angels we'll lay
And stroke the pain in eachother's eyes.

Lay with me, sweet Misery;
For you, my love, these chains.
I would that you could bleed for me
And make me feel again.

"Dear Sun"

Why must you of horizons chase?
Dear Sun, leave not my heart.
For colors weep like running paint
Whenfrom my world you part.
They pool at my feet like molten dreams
That seep into my skin
And wash my veins in shades of grey
That now my soul could rain.
And if the world would swallow me,
How into it I would bleed
And maybe wake unto the light of day;
Dear Sun, why must you leave?

"On Breath"

Silent night, moonless night,
    interminable black waters;
Sounds, like ponderous butterfly koi,
    surfacing... returning

Expanding, contracting;
    the universe my breath...
Nevermore, neverless;
    there is only awareness
"Song of Suffiero"

Long have I warred and grappled with gods;  
Lain siege to The Hall of Kings,  
Where maestros make each opus of pain  
By breaking a songbird's wings.

"Come now Suffiero, my lover and child,  
Even Eden was fated despair.  
For there are no arms like Misery's, child;  
My sweat is the salt of your tears."

Like the crooked spine of the arching sky,  
I was bent under heaven's own weight.  
Thrown from her walls, through godspit I crawled;  
Decreed anathema by Fate.

Through gardens of flame walk these memories;  
My cupboards hold jars of smoke.  
Each fog-brushed face looks better this way;  
Lines of grief kissed by the ghost.

"On Poems"

Everything is lost -  
serenity -  
thoughtless and adrift
Words, like seeds,  
floating on the breeze  
alight upon my lips

And they were like poems,  
each and every one,  
...some perfect...  
...some broken...
These words  
were already out there  
waiting to be spoken

"And Love"

I fear not death as I do love,  
Nor war as I do your lips.  
No throne was there made  
That love could not break;  
No horizon that love would not chase.

From tear-sodden rags of misery  
Love squeezes the very last dregs.  
No hell-bound shore, nor storm-laden sea  
That love could not humble in rage.
"Be Well"

Be well, my love,
    for I have gone;
    my dark cloud
    from upon you lifting
And though, for now,
    the sun may shine,
    the heart
    was made
    for bleeding

"Black Lightning"

Black lightning strikes,
    silent thunder rolls -
    everywhere my heart is beating
I can hear the caterpillar's
    footsteps fall
    and the butterfly
    flap its wings

Black lightning strikes,
    silent thunder rolls -
    the universe is falling
The sun has no wings;
    it plummets like me -
    through slipstream
    and updraft
    revolving

"God's Eye"

Reason is the hammer that shatters our dreams
And truth is the sum of all lies;
For surely the sky is more than just blue
When seen through the all-seeing eye

"Stone Rivers"

Behind me drowns their veiled speech,
Like underwater words,
Giving up this side of forever
Unto the Closer of Doors

The scattered pieces of yesterday
Will rest where lie my dreams
And send only faint echoes my way
When I tug upon the wind
"Song of Spring"

I feed the songbird poison seed
That sings the love-lust song of Spring,
For better they should court the grave
And give the worms their hearts instead

And when they hang from wishing wells
And sing their songs for the hag-child Hel,
Let every wish of love accursed
Be painted black and give still-birth

"You Are"

You are a splash of color in a world of night;
the wellspring of all poetry.
You are the quiet place inside my head;
the sacred place where all roads end.
You are a mother's breast to my hungry child
and the blanket that shields from fears.
You are the sight that even blind men see;
the sound that even deaf men hear.
You are the only thing that can find me
when I am lost inside myself.
You are the missing piece for that empty space
in the puzzle that is my soul.
You are the verse that has never been spoken,
but that everyone longs to hear.
You are a drop of dew that is glimmering
in the desert of this: my heart.
You are the one thing that I will remember
when there's nothing left to forget.
You are the fluttering thing the gods have chased,
but they just can not seem to catch.

"No More"

When no more my love is upon you
and you swallow your dreams
with a gasping breath
And to wake is to meet
with the galloping rain
and the tracks
that your tears have left

When no more my words do move you,
as the wellspring of heart has run dry
And the shroud you crocheted
for my passions is laid
in the place
where my poetry died
"Dear Love, My Heart"

Dear love, my heart,
in all that I have lost
of you there has been some part
And though I gave chase
to the tails of dreams
with each movement of time they outpaced me
And my memories, they bleed,
and sometimes it does seem
that they are much older than I
How far they have grown
from that thing by which cast;
in my grief tell me what do I grieve for?
Yet they call unto me, these memories,
"Will someone remember my name?"
And their keeper is I but each moment I die,
fingernails buried in things fleeting
And neither am I of this body contained
nor ending in the space between
And there upon wings I fly unrestrained,
my feathers the horizons brushing
And here I lament at the turning of leaves
when I am myself the seasons
And happiness, my friend, is the seed of regret,
into the navel of despair roots growing
And the flower that is born bears the colors of heart -
shimmering iridescence

Dear love, my heart,
there is naught I have lost
that somewhere beyond time is but waiting
And whoever you are we are of one heart
and like emptiness does form I embrace you
And for each tear that we weep,
feeling them in every pore of our being,
I hear your sobs and like silence receive you
And when you do breathe I am your breath,
from your pain I am release
In sleep I am the fabric of your dreams
that your mind with abandon does weave
And when all that you know
is gone or undone
I am alone
what awaits you

"A Secret Way"

There is a secret way into Heaven
known only to those here in Hell,
But you should not believe everything that you read,
so come and see for yourself
"The Fool's Burden"

I wander unseen
through a blind man's dream,
chewing on rocks and drinking warm urine
The manifold things
are ugly like me;
everywhere parts of me are unfolding

With looking-glass strings
this fabric is weaved;
I am the harlot and I the virgin
The skies were unclean
so I plucked my wings
and knelt at the altar of confusion

Too often I think -
of reason I stink -
I don't know what it means to be human
I torment my needs
then watch my soul bleed;
I am done with the fool's holy burden

"Little Demon"

Hush little demon, grim horror of night,
I know how you weep and your ugliness hide.
How it must be when to speak is to scream,
To hug is to rend and to kiss is to cleave!

Have you no family, no lover, no home?
At the sight of your smile does everyone run?
Tell me does anyone answer your prayers,
And have you a mother to wipe away tears?

Know you not pleasure and have you no name?
Were you left in a cradle of nails by rain?
Here in my closet and under my bed
I have waiting a place for your gruesome head.

"Indigo Mountains"

Indigo mountains
by mist at dawn,
chasing the tails of dreams
Ivory petals
caress my skin;
gentle is the sea-breeze

Golden arbors shimmering
cascade in yellow rains -
Laburnum flowers
felled from skies
drift on a floundering stream
"What it Means"

On the stone-slammed shores of a sleeping river, black teeth jut from cotton skirts of snow. There is a strange and unsettling silence draped over all that I see, as if the whole universe is holding one collective breath, or perhaps I am the only living thing in a painting unremembered - alone, alone, so very alone. There is neither sky nor land. Whatever horizons this strange world has are clothed in the white jacket of madness - they have forgotten themselves and ceased to be. Maybe the dreams of a thousand men could revive them. For now, with me, they wait in hungry silence - a vast fertile emptiness... reaching... reaching... I hear the wet smack of a green apple as it strikes the rock before me. Wherefrom it has fallen I can not know, but it is bleeding - split in two. I am not sure what it means, though it is haunting and somewhat beautiful - red rivulets pooling in a wash of neon light... crazed moths courting death, smashing their heads against signs unfamiliar. I do not know this town and I feel quite naked as I drive through. My watch is broken, so I stop to buy another - another broken watch, though I am not sure why. The store owners smile at me knowingly as I fasten it upon my wrist. As I leave town, each and every head turns slowly toward me, for they know that I am there. Their smiles are sick with dementia, stretched like a joker's painted lips; each smile is of the same - their smiles are not their own, I know, but I do not know what it means or why the apple is bleeding. This is a place of secrets.

I can feel something very unfamiliar in my mouth. My heavy tongue bears down upon it. One by one I push the teeth from their soft pink bed - there now, that is better - they do not belong here, though I know not why. I hold in my hands the savage remains of my mouth - the square white stretched canvas upon which empty flowers are unfolding. The sweat of rose petals brim with electric light beneath the turning moon and I am time, though I can not understand how little pieces of forever never seem to last, or how I am supposed to build the house of eternity with collapsing bricks... reason. Reason is a sickness and it can not hold here. I can feel my body seizing and thrashing in protest as if I were very slowly forcing myself through a stone wall; I am pain. The voice of night in a mirrored hush upon my heart now plays and thoughts begin swimming through my mind, like drunken fish at sea. I know what it means to live here, where the art of living is the art of masturbation. I can feel the warm sweet slaver drooling from my slackened lips; it is the thick honeyed juice dribbling from the fruit of madness - the fruit of a world unencumbered. The glorious idiot now stands upon his ugly head, smearing
himself with the fecal stench of reason. I can see the swelling masses gathered
about the naked lunatic. He is teaching them. They marvel at the way he pleasures
himself with misery and self-loathing. "He is indomitable," they say, though they
know not how their own delights unsettle him. I want to speak with him and tell him
that I alone understand; that if it makes you happy, it is—probably not true, for
the truth is not kind. But he is thinking too loudly... He does not want my eyes
and I am no longer sure why I have pulled them out. I do not know what it means;
I prefer the place of secrets.

"The Fears"

I must have loved them,
For many and many have they become...

Do I by night in orgies lie
beside their wizened frames;
Their lurid flesh my hands caress,
love-sweat upon each face?

Are these the screams of dying dreams,
of alleycats by night,
Or sultry wails from here in hell -
my lover's warbling sigh?

Do I by sleep our children eat
beneath their leathered wings?
Have I not kissed their bloodless lips,
though they are torn by fangs?

Did I not drink the fetid ink
of these: their withered breasts,
And wipe their wide and sightless eyes
that run like rivulets?

Have I brought hate unto that place
where worship all the Fears;
Cursed with their priests the liturgies
and screamed with them the prayers?

Have I laid peace upon their sheets
and let them stroke my pain,
While nursing hope that when I woke
I'd learned to feel again?

"Show Me"

Show me which way the wind blows
and I'll show you the way to my heart;
Show me the place where dreams grow
and I'll show you where nightmares start
"The Gobblers"

Wet with death is the lighting breath
  drawn by the newborn child
Whither the hordes of gobblers swarm
  from the netherworld wilds

Vying for space where senses wait
  to hear the infant's scream -
Living their lives on borrowed time;
  eating your unperceiveds

Sometimes you think you have but blinked
  and they have used your eyes,
Or when the words have passed unheard
  they were by gobblers swiped

When you grow old, with senses cold,
  or in a coma lie,
The gobblers seek to take your place
  and when they do, you die

"Ever Love"

Ever, ever love -
  the birth of tragedy
From the ebbing tides
  of a heavy love
    to the wild open sea

Ever, ever love -
  whither shall I wake
When capricious winds
  and currents weave
    the fabric of my fate?

"Tumble-Down Skies"

For when the skies come tumbling down
  the marionettes are stilled
From the blue moon's stain: electric rains
  and empty flowers unfold
Lazy winds follow eddies of sand;
  fingers playing through many worlds
Wet clay from my hands drips to the ground,
  like a poet's unformed words
And the crooked spine of the arching sky
  is bent under heaven's own weight
And questions, like sweat, drip from my mind
  and melt with the galloping rain
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Love"

Love. There is no kindness in love.
Love is sudden and barbarous.
Behind every kiss - a beast of prey;
The barely suppressed desire
To bite into your lover's flesh,
To feed upon one another -
More than ownership. Inseparate.
Love? Love is cannibalism.

"My Calling"

Do you know who I am? For I know who you are:
You are the life of my words at this moment
And under your breath I arise from the past;
My ghost on your lips with each movement

In the looking-glass of your eyes I am before and behind
For the ink on these leaves is my calling
And your goose-bumped flesh is my phantom caress;
Fingers breaching the nether horizons

"Without You"

Never do my lips
of laughter know,
when you are lost to me;
Ever does
the shadow fall,
when you are not around

"Moondust Overtures"

Through time-swept days
our yesterdays fade;
as soft as eyelashes they fall
Memories washed
with bleach-sopped cloth;
empty frames upon dumbstruck walls

As the leaves on the trees
begin falling I see
that they fall just the same as my soul
And though I tied little strings
to my cataract dreams,
those strings are now all that I hold

"Thought"

I have not found the answers
that I was looking for,
but I find
that I have fewer questions
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"A Prelude to Madness"

Dewdrops trickle down the stone walls of my tomb, staining the shadow faces in rusted iron rivulets... tumbling; tumbling with lazy grace down the lampless avenues of my mind, spilling like beads of acid mercury over the twisted canvas of my soul, etching sunken trails behind them. The very pores of the air are bleeding in sympathy, wounded by the hollow silence that cradles the sound of my lover's departed voice. I have woken from the dream to find myself carried by the acolytes of Eros, butcher's aprons smeared with the scarlet teardrops of heart. I am thrown from the Abattoir of Love and broken upon its stairs. Yet I know, even now, that I am not alone. Have at me, Misery! Oh, I see you crawling in my open wound, but you shall have naught of me; for the warbling aria of my laughter is the honeyed kiss of the gods, the idiot's armor, the opening notes in a prelude to madness.

I have left myself behind; floating with dream bubbles upon the twilight breeze, rising with the long earthen shadows to rest in the shattered glass valleys of the moon, where Heaven's dust clouds the great blind eye of divinity. Ever dawn. Ever, ever, dawn... shadows fall from painted black skies, burdened by dreams gathered and memories unforgotten, while somewhere far, far away the golden rose of reason glitters upon the burial mound of heart. I once held myself there, in the buckled embrace of the scholar's robe, though no more; for I have pulled the gray muscle of my torment from whither I draw breath and I am every moment, boundless, unencumbered. I am the fay spirit of childhood, standing upon the great balcony - precipice of the Earth - spinning daisies amongst the stars. I am the jester in the court of gods, Heaven's fool, and Misery's smile. I have caught my leaking dreams in a bucket beside my weary head and with them painted jig-saw pieces for the puzzle that never was. I have chased the answer that they pull on strings until the questions went up in smoke, and given all that I had to love until the giver himself was lost.

"The Flower of a Dream"

Maybe it was the flower of a dream whose seed was lost in the mists of reality. I think that I ate that flower; that was just how much I loved it. But now that it is gone, I don't know how to say goodbye. It hurts. And yet, how do you say goodbye to a part of yourself; to a part that is already gone?
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"So Much for the Roses"

Forgive me, my love, for that I have gone;
For that I have not the strength to go on.
My aching veins throb with Misery's blood
And I am alone forgotten by god.

From the angel's arms my soul-child was thrown;
I fell to this world unloved and forlorn.
Now the wheel of time has carried me home
And the sign here says that, "Heaven is closed."

"How Long"

How long your darkness upon my soul,
like the skin of Misery
How far your blue wings carried me
and left me alone to weep

Feel you not the electric air -
my storm upon your horizon?
I drink of your bleeding hourglass
'till your hour, at last, has fallen

"Of Poetry"

When you, my love,
can taste the sun
or hear the color blue...
When you can see a symphony
and the movement
each note exudes...
When you can feel the silence
settle upon your skin,
Or in the patter of cymbals know
the redolence of rain...

"Blasphemy"

My love, my love,
take not my love
for ever will I find you
And cast my spear at your throne, fell god;
the burning gates behind me

Mine is the fury of the spitting sun;
my darling, sweet, sweet Hel.
Now I would hear your confessions, dear god,
and shrive your checkered soul

When from my dust rise phantom wings,
let fall your final hour
For my heavy hand of justice swings
the gavel like Thor's hammer
"Long Shadows"

Long are the shadows of yesterday;
forever will I love you
Your words still drift, like windblown leaves -
brushstrokes on a painted sky -
Floating above this burning man,
setting pieces of the night on fire

"Nowhere"

Nowhere it seems
is nightfall but me
Nor twilight lost
when I am the sun
And ever-what-is-more
I am distant shores
And the lapping of waves
beyond heaven's horizons

"Heaven Falling"

From the broken glory
of a shattered day
I piece together night
And hold the sky
upon tremulous hands
'till heaven about me alights

I taste the wonder
of an everlasting breath,
for mine are the hands of time;
When ever paradise
about me falls,
whither shall I rise?

"When Come These Tears"

Tears unspent, like promises,
of coming memories await;
A colorless dream, silent words passing,
some secret meaning I knew at the time

Unseen sun, we are alone;
soft visions washed from my mind
Grasping as they, like vapors fade;
a child chasing butterflies

"Of Time"

The great hand of yesterday
reaches for today.
and rests his hand on her shoulder
'till she yields tomorrow's gaze
Olean, Olean,
Long is the loveless road.
Everwhen and again your byways wend
Through the cold dark side of Heaven.

Olean, dear Olean,
Lost child of Misery's get;
All about you I see the windfall of dreams,
Like fish out of water and breath.

With broken ladders, naked wings,
And your heavy basket of hate;
On the bottlestone road your teardrops fall -
The table salt of gods.

Olean, Olean,
There is a haunting beauty in undressed pain:
The wilting rose, the howling wolf,
The greiving widow's empty embrace,
The weeping child, or madness unbridled,
The chattle crier of Heaven-spent rage.

Olean, dear Olean,
Can you see the Starflower Tree?
Upon her roots white lightning rides
And she drinks of our cloud-fledged dreams.

Olean, Olean,
I remember when we
Sat on the banks of the Willow's Way Creek;
How we made little boats with sails of leaves
And laughed at the way they tumbled down stream.

"Lavender Teardrops"

Lavender teardrops and velvet rain;
field of sodden dreams
How Heaven does weep upon this sea of green;
thin leaves bear the weight of her pain

My back, like yours, is bent with grief;
I too have lost the sun
How the colors were bled
from rainbow'd skies
and the laughter
from the air
was wrung

"Yesteryears"

Here lies the bridge
of yesteryears
Spanning the tears
we have cried
Where memories dance
like fireflies
And fade
back into the night
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Moonless Night"

Moonless night eternal,
how unto me you call;
Bring me unto you,
oh twilight of time,
that my arms may
of curtain’d horizons breach;
there some refuge finding

When from the gates of time I walk,
their shadow left behind me,
let fall my crown of suffering;
heavy burden of me no more
Carry me there
where days are lost,
sleepless amongst the stars

"Dances in the Dark"

If I could squeeze a memory
from this fabric that bore your scent
And taste your ghost in the dregs of your sweat,
I would never release the breath

The silence screams with your memory -
you bleed through the folds in the dark -
As empty flowers in a naked vase,
where once was a touch of your heart

"A Petal Cast"

Wax and wane the wayward wind,
rise and fall my heart
Petals cast into ebbing tides -
memories en passant -
Of senescent ire, ardor and yen
upon the sea so loosed
And to each their own
a petal cast upon
swiftly receding waves

Follow you the sinking sun,
ever you return
Follow you the sinking sun,
ever you return

"When Love"

When a kiss as soft as a butterfly’s breath
can shake your soul like thunder;
When your memories and dreams
part like smoke on a breeze
and each moment, alone, lasts forever
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Whiskey"

Lips caress a crystal glass,
of loneliness undressing
Liquid pools of emptiness;
hours pass in a puddle of wax
Memories washed in tenderness -
     amber eddies in a rainbow's nest -
All the colors are stretched
     until nothing is left,
     and the sounds
     draw thin
     unto silence

"A Magical Poem"

What good are the pieces
     of a shattered dream
     if I can't put them together?
But what if I squeezed
     all the colors from each
     and made from the ink a letter?
Or maybe a poem,
     a magical one,
     fledging a dream's first feathers
And the movement there formed
     in chanting her words,
     could wake sacred things
     from their slumbers...

"Winter's Eve"

Autumn dusk, Winter's Eve;
crooning doves chase garnet skies,
Crystal-lace webbed windowpanes
     emit subtle wisps
     by the glow of a fire
When snow does fall
     as feathered rains,
ever-so-softly
     unto barren trees
Blanket the Earth
     in heavenly sheets,
     and the world
     drifts off
to sleep

"Death"

I dreamed of the lover
     without a face
She said, "Heaven's gate
     only opens one way."
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"Burning Memories"

Everyday burning memories
  part like blisters upon the sun:
All their colors turn gray,
  different shades of the same -
  temples of forgotten gods

Of empty shells and rose petals felled,
  silent tears under blankets of night,
An unspoken word, a poet's lost verse,
  the breath of your lover's last sigh

"About Me My Lover"

The air tastes sweet with your memory;
  I hear your laughter in the stirring of leaves
And in the graceful arch of the arbor reach
  it is your body's own form that I see

I bathe in the sun as I bathed in your flesh;
  Your fingers do play on the breeze
And the babbling brook is your own gentle voice,
  lulling me softly to sleep

"My Addiction"

Your flesh is my addiction -
  your painted soul
   from my palette of dreams
Quivering beneath my hungry hands
  and aching for release

I find myself in your body
  and lose myself in your soul;
Enter the Orchid of Eden and drink
  the nectar that it holds

That shuddering gasp,
  like a star's first breath,
  has felled both angels and men
And your arching back
  is Heaven's own bridge;
  your sweat my river of sin

Electric waves of passion roll
  with the ocean in your thighs
  and steam like sunbeams
  burning holes
  in heavy, storm-laden skies

My body can not contain me,
  you are much too great for yours;
Like waters we pour through Heaven's gate -
  your womb - the birthplace of gods
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"My Lover on Wind"

The voice of my lover caresses the wind
and here in my dreams does find me
Where I dance with her breath,
as the whirling of leaves,
and the shadow of wind moves beneath us

The sound of our hearts is the color of rain
and our pulse is its patter on tin
And while I do dream somewhere it does seem
that her soul must be moved by the music

"Neverending Dream"

Thus spoke the heart
of a neverending dream
Where the hourglass of time is stretched
'till a moment spans the seas
And the landscape of our dreams does melt
into whatever we'd wish it to be;
The world as an expression
of what our hearts do need

Beads of sweat fall from my dreams,
sending great ripples through time
That pass through the laced fabric of space
and bleed through the holes in the sky

Don't tell me that my dreams are not real;
that reason is a waking breath
For the soul does feed on the waters here spring'd
and your world is a passing guest

And all that you see are but shadows of dreams
and these are the seeds of your hope
And if ever my world comes crumbling down,
no shadows will dance on your walls

"Roots" (Published—Aoife's Kiss)

There is a place where nothing is holy
and every moment of eternity bleeds,
Where we whirl about on the winds of our dreams
and dance with the gathering shades

Where hungry ghosts feed long parched throats
and birds pluck not their wings
And from the whimpering cry of the broken beast
rises fury and madness uncaged

They are the dark discordant melodies-
some native, yet distant, breath-
And they pull like the soft ineffable call
of a child to its mother's breast
Iron rains spill from my veins -
the jongleur is leaving the halls -
No more the bridegroom to Misery;
my love, your embrace, let fall

The wind, by reeds, whispers my name;
I hear singing amongst the stars
Let fall my shield and I shall fade
like a shadow into the dark

"The Whispers"

Amongst the woods - the boughs and shrubs -
the whispers shape the winds;
Rustling the leaves to stir the breeze,
swaying the gales to send

The banished ghosts do wail and moan,
gliding on wood-spun breath;
Seeking in shade bodies to take -
bridges to walk at death

Some force their way and whispers make,
while others share the ride.
Sometimes the temple walls will fall,
leaving nowhere to hide

Some go straight for netherworld gates,
spilling down spiral stairs,
Where whirlpools wend and cyclones bend
through holes rent in the air

Look to the skies when rains have died,
by twilight's silver stain -
Whispers abound on tree top crowns,
like phantom candle flames

"Diaries of the Dead" (Published, Aoife's Kiss)

Through the parting veil
betwixt our worlds,
there in the sacred dark
Linger the words
that were lost to me;
the skeleton keys of my heart

Chasing the words
that were formed on her lips,
but knew not the taste
of her breath
From behind the curtains
of silence I seek
the echo
that movement
did sketch
"The Slow-Farthings"

Slow-farthings squeeze
through the holes in our dreams;
Through the dross
in our clockworked memories

With days betwixt breaths,
one thought and the next,
On snail-steads
they sever links to the past

The eaters of change
and cheaters of days
Leave tokens
of the things they have replaced

An unremembered ring,
or shoelace string,
The lost thing
that your hands are now holding

Moving so slow
that their trek is unknown;
Stolen futures
in a basket they hold

You alone see
why your memories weep -
Your lost dreams
in their lands are unfolding

"The Laughing Glass"

It is there
beyond the quiet room,
tickling the air with laughter

The circus parade,
the grand legerdemain,
a joke sown by the Mad Tailor

Every serious face
is a comic relief;
actors lost in character

The lunatic waits
for us to take the stage
'that he might laugh forever

"Sweet Misery"

Bring to me sweet Misery,
that I might heartily cry
Remind me that I am human;
raise my eyes unto the sky
Brandon Landreth, CDC # AG7347

"Autumn Leaves"

For what are we
but Autumn leaves,
awaiting our last zephyr?

Thither my breeze
to carry me
unto the rest
of eternal winter

"Moondrops"

Moondrops upon a spider web;
Each one the other holding -
Sun-smote soul of looking-glass worlds;
Each one in the other unfolding

"Everfall"

Everfall, as night upon shadow,
day upon light,
dream within dream
Evenfall, as the pairings of time;
twice known, once befell
Evenfall, to imagine the man -
the man whose idea was me
Evenfall, as space within space;
a mirror on itself
so folded

"Digging for Roses"

Some do dig for diamonds
and others for veins of gold,
But I would dig
the deepest of mines
for the glory
of a single rose

"Once I Was a King"

Once I was a king.
I drank from goblets of gold
And pissed into a bucket
Adorned with the finest jewels

But lo, I fell upon her eyes,
Like a samurai upon his sword;
Like a moth I was unto the flame -
Once, I was a king
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Color of Silence"

Every unheard whisper spent,
    every movement come to rest,
Shapes the echo of silence
    and seeds
    the thunder's clouded nest

The yawning chasm of time
    does speak
    through the liquid shadows
    here cast

And the many
    colors of silence
    are weaved
    into every
    turning breath

"Beaches"

Then love,
    know that I am near;
    ever my footprints
    about you setting

When upon sand
    your toes do curl,
    I am there between them

In the radiant warmth
    that bathes your soul,
    I am the light
    your skin is breathing

And the seagull's cry
    is the sound of all sounds
    and shares with me
    its origins

And the briny air
    is the taste of my sweat;
    the clouds, by wind,
    my carriage

And wherever you wander,
    I am there;
    at the end of all roads
    I await you

"Winter's Hollow"

Alone my winter's hollow stays
The flurry of moon-pressed leaves,
The anxious shades of unborn days
And the sweat of my palsied dreams

Her feather-capped swells of silence keep
The restless things at bay
And the wet-clay words of sleep adore
Each wheel of cotton rain
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"My Lover's Dreams"

I steal the breath from upon your lips
As you labor in the sweat of your dreams,
And I taste in your ghost the depths of your soul
And bathe in the waters there spring'd

I walk fields of grass where your passions are wet;
How they dance though they know not a breeze,
And I trail my hands through their stalks as I pass
For to lick from my fingers their ink

Forever I would stay and your breath I'd contain,
But it parts from my lips with a sigh
And when darkness cascades on my heart like black rain,
The tailwinds of your memories I ride

"The Saw-Toothed Word"

For you, my love, the saw-toothed word;
The fat heavy letters that weigh on each verse,
Little drops of blue rain that tattoo each page,
The slaver that drips from the maw of my pain

Your love is a dirty and tormented thing -
The pushcart prophet's piss-stained dreams.
The smoke of your effigy floats on the air...
It's not that I don't love you; I just don't care

"Wonderings"

And what are the dreams
of a blind man like?
What colors and shapes
would they be?

And what does a rainbow look like
in black and white?
It's a photo I'd love to see.

And where goes the thought
that has been thunk?
The sunken sound when tired?

And what is the way
of a simple word
spoken at the perfect time?

And is there a place
where the clock doesn't tick;
where the shadow of time
doesn't fall?

And is a person
really there anymore
when no one
remembers them
at all?
"Stardust"

They rise and fall like starbursts -
   flowers of light unfolding then dying,
Invisible rains that sparkle and fade
   like fireflies that pulse with my mind

And if ever I thought that stones could not weep,
   it was only that I knew naught of their tears
For they breathe just like me and on their faces I see
   the time-baffled screams of sloth-saddled years

And Winter's cold wake brings crystalline flakes -
   our emotions at play in the sky
They fall at my feet and bleed liquid beads -
   tiny dreams that had learned how to fly

Gray vapors on trees dance to breezes unseen -
   spectral flames that long ago died
And heaven about us is falling like rain;
   burning questions are spread through the skies

"The Sunken Road"

My footprints show upon the Sunken Road.
   It is the dawn of my surrender.
To let fall, like a bird, from cloud-swept skies;
   Of the dreamless heavens grown tired.

By moon drifts my soul through nightingale calls
   From the boughs of the Starflower Tree;
My silver-washed song trickles therefrom -
   Tiny teardrops felled from our dreams:

   "Mine alone is the ugly hero.
   Mine alone is the stuttering sage.
   Mine is the home of unrequited love
   Where a lone bowerbird ever waits."

The dark hole of my heart can not be filled,
   Nor my tumble-down empire raised.
Most of my memories taste better with wine;
   Nevermore would I dance with their shades.

"Thrice I Curse Your Name"

Once, for broken promises;
   may your tongue run black with flies
Twice, for my desperate sorrows;
   may your heart fall by my side
Thrice, as fell Judas and Brutus,
   for so too is your shame -
To the measure their blood becomes you,
   thrice I curse your name
"Darkness"

Darkness. Shadow tendrils seep into my skin, slithering... slithering, like hell-spawned demon worms of the blackest mists, seeking... seeking out with ravenous mouths that last flickering light that I have hidden somewhere deep within that forbidden word. DARKNESS, tattooing my soul, laying roots like withered veins throughout my very being, pounding... pounding with its heavy fists against my fractured skull, splintering my rising flesh beneath these pressing palms. Darkness, like molten black candle wax, bleeding from my pores, bursting from my swollen head to splatter on the walls... black dreams, black thoughts, black memories - all the things I thought were me. My fingers drag through yesterdays, smearing blots of ink... an eclectic bum, a shit king god, a crazed and raging worm, a one man war, a personality whore, a big meanie amidst the fun. I reach inside my busted head - somewhere there was a light - my shadow's got a hold of me; that's why I can not fly.

"Netherworld's Well"

A dreampit adorns the Temple of Stars.
Some call it the Netherworld's Well,
Where castaway dreams and nightmarish things
From the cradle of life are felled.

In whole or in part, the rubbish of gods
Alight in the Netherworld Wilds,
Where the unwanted roam and pieces are sown
Into patchwork and motley wights.

The Mad Tailor's brood and creatures unused
On the dark side of evermore wait
For the childhood gift or idiot wit
To dazzle the Keeper of Gates.

Through silver-leaf curtains in groves of three,
By light of the hollow moon,
The strangest of things come hither unseen
And are born unto flesh and bone.

The creatures of yore and mystical lore
From thitherworld ever have come,
While chameleons, squid, snails, mantes and pigs
Of the Mad Tailor's needle are sprung.

No destiny holds the discarded souls -
The omens of caprice and change -
To be given the kiss of namelessness
Is to alter the fabric of fate.
"Ode to a Bride"

I have seen the worms press and squirm
beneath my lover's skin;
Have heard the wet and sucking breath
that marks their pass within

Like writhing veins under her face
that breach to meet my kiss,
My teeth have pulled them from their holes;
sweet sickness on my lips

Her weeping sores my hands explored -
necrotic, warm and wet -
The gaping holes my fingers probed;
dug deep within her flesh

When from her scalp my hands pulled out
the scabbed and bleeding locks,
With tender care I placed them there
where hang her fallen parts

I've wondered how, when so endowed,
the heavens let her go;
My blushing bride, alike inside,
I guess I'll never know

"The Neverlings"

We are alike, both you and I;
Wayward leaves of a wormwood tree.
We drink from skies crystals of light -
Tiny teardrops pilfered from dreams.

Side by side, with young virgin eyes,
We parted the curtains of sense
Where skyworms glide on cosmic tides;
Hungry drifters on mystic winds.

Falling holes drift down from above,
Like sinking diaphonous beads,
Whither floods of Neverling bloods -
The thinnest of things - ever squeeze.

Piece by piece our matter they seize,
Slow-robbing a devil's montage,
To fill the hole of Neverworld
With an odd and inverse collage.

Each hour here passed is there one less;
They gain as we vanish and fade -
Here nearing death and there at breast;
Hither at grave and thither unmade.
"The Grim"

The grim took her smile away,  
    the grim made her cry,  
The grim drank the tears she made  
    until they ran dry

The grim are lords of anger,  
    the grim foster grief,  
The grim summon the hungers  
    and enchant to greed

The grim invented torture,  
    the grim - rich and poor,  
The grim dreampt up the borders  
    and engines of war

The grim gave us religion,  
    the grim gave us race,  
The grim with Noose of Fury,  
    reddening your face

"Memories"

Blue shadows and jealous memories,  
    the burning storybook page,  
The slow-crawling things  
    that chew holes in our dreams  
    and burrow in each moment we make...

The cloud-crushed song  
    of flowerbuds unsprung,  
    striving to part the skies,  
The palsied hand  
    of the heart-sick man,  
    trying to pull back the tides

"Pariah"

My one magic seed never seemed to grow  
And my memories fade, like rings of smoke;  
Every hope and promise, undone at the seams -  
Wind-scattered leaves in a boneyard of dreams.

All my footsteps fall upon waiting worms  
And the flowers before me wilt as though burned.  
I have walked the dungeons of Hell unharmed  
And the Devil himself fled my open arms.
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Idiot Queen"

From the burning tongues of poets long gone
drift ribbons of floating mist.
I chew on their words and savor each verse -
the curse of the silverfish.

With them I fly and dig holes in the sky -
a place to bury my seeds -
When I awake I'll return to this place
and see if my clouds took wing.

My war-steed of dreams is a widebeest
and Reason before me flees;
Casting my spears at the Keepers of Time
and stilling the moontide seas.

I suckle the teat of the Idiot Queen,
for hers is the milk of dreams.
Mine is the learning of a newborn babe:
there's naught for life but to scream.

"Wailing of Walls"

Unto the wailing of walls
and the woes that they have seen -
of cruelties and anguish unnoticed
and the faceless eaters of dreams
Behind them we screamed,
were felled and did bleed;
our miseries before them stood naked -
our every lament etched in the paint,
so wail the walls throughout the ages

"Fallen"

When from your graces fallen
and brought unto my knees,
I remember the skies
where once I walked,
therefrom your arms released

How from your heart
where once I roamed
stand I now estranged?
And where is the place
where we did cross
into nightmares
from our dreams?
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"In Darkness"

For those that live in darkness
knowing of light is pain,
For in the pit
of the blackest despair
upon our own sickness
we feed

"Field of Roses"

Flowers at fold,
like so many dreams,
there in a field of roses

Some do wither
before first bloom
and others
with majesty
open

"The Mortal's Lament"

That when all the leaves have fallen,
the wind will blow them away;
That we have walked in the shadow
of another man's dreams
and we have left
no footprints
behind us...

"Rootless"

Rootless,
as dust motes adrift
Formless,
as shadows by night
Silent,
as gathering clouds
I blink
and the world
is gone

"Jade Moon"

Jade moon,
black sea,
white diamonds;
Ever sing
the midnight skies -
Sparkling
as eyes
with laughter
And ever-so-often
they cry
Listen and you can hear me
In the rustling of leaves;
Close your eyes and feel me -
My hands caress your skin

Softly, as the breath of a fish,
Or the whisperings of clouds;
Gently, as when moonbeams flex
Through ripples in a pond

I claim the tears you have wept
And shadow all your laughter -
All the shades of heretofore
Echo in the hereafter

When from the world
your love has gone;
darkness about me descending
My heart is still,
as winds when spent;
quiet and vaguely unsettling
I chased the past
as it trailed away;
some traces of you there finding
There lie the footprints
where once we walked;
now I do tread them without you

Butterflies by moon emerging therefrom -
Elysian Fields by childhood laughter;
Tall grasses by breeze undulate as green seas
Forever, and ever, and after

Silver-light glistens, the blind eye illumes
Lands of dragon-fire and magical ruins

Awaken all night flowers from your daytime dreams -
Remembrances of children on tree-tire swings;
To Elysian Fields where visions do spring
Of fireflies dancing on clear-watered streams

If you were a butterfly,
I would lick the powder off your wings
If you were a flower,
I would eat you
"Broken Heart Bequethed"

To you my broken heart bequethed;  
Of it I no longer have need.  
It has been stepped on, stomped out,  
  bit upon and kicked;  
  at present it does bleed

To you my broken heart bequethed;  
Of it I no longer have need.  
Take of me this tossed rag of flesh;  
For no more do I wish to feel

"Say No More"

Say no more that you are sorry.  
Speak no more your fickle lies.  
I ache as though you've gored me  
And pressed needles into my eyes.

"Of Time"

Think not of time,  
  for soon shall it come  
  and usher the here to hereafter
Think not of time,  
  for soon shall it come  
  and rob us of our laughter

"Distant Memory"

I have some distant memory  
Of a child's carefree play;  
Was it me who once knew how to laugh?  
Nay, I died again today.

"Dream Poet"

When happiness is rubbed,  
When happiness is stroked,  
When happiness has had its fill,  
The fount of tears erupts

"Crystal Stairs"

I climb a flight  
  of crystal stairs  
And through each step  
  I fall;  
Somehow nowhere  
  is where I go  
And the only way  
  is up
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"The Elegy of DruAnn Marie"

Her last aching breath falls away;
Marbled waves drowning in a lonely sea.
One long pregnant night dissolves with a sigh
And the clouded canopy of my grief
Draws shadows across the morning sun,
Nursing a hungry pain.

Life's tired promise fades,
Robbing her face of all that is familiar
And a hollow silence settles like dust
Over the rubble of fallen dreams.

Evermore or Nevermore?
I see only the unfinished bridge.
Mother I would hear your voice again
And my unholy vigil wanes.
Though your words be soft and wrapped in fog,
Mother I am listening.

But all is drenched in misery.
The laughter of children seems far away
And the kiss of madness is upon my lips;
In the shadow of Heaven I cry.

All of my memories were once reflections on a pond,
But time brought the first drops of rain.
Now I tug at their tails and dig holes in my head
And wait for the ripples to fade.

I dip my pen in the welling ink
From where my soul now bleeds
And scribble my passions on the burning skies,
Then watch them fall like Autumn leaves.

Of your lost children I am but one
And I am alone in this moment,
Where ashes drift like feathered hate -
Broods of unsung pain -
Then fall like beads of liquid night
That seep into my skin.

The pale sun of twilight moans,
Crowning the ageless night
And my anger fades like a tired flame,
Gray vapors kissing the skies.

We are but ragdolls tossed unto rabid dogs,
Flung about on Nature's whin;
Born to a life of suffering.
For our mercy? A promised end.
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"I Bleed Myself"

I bleed myself  
that I might know  
what it means to be alive
Betwixt two breaths,  
one thought and the next,  
I am emptiness - divine

Scarlet teardrops tumbling -  
liquid hourglass  
weeping time
I stand outside of a moment  
and scream;  
for what  
I know not why

"Somewhen"

Sometimes I find  
fickle eddies in time;  
somewhen where the little things change
Where the colors I see  
are thrown differently,  
but the others say all is the same

Yet somehow I know  
as each change unfolds  
that my past and my futures were stolen
And I am afraid  
that somewhen I'll awake  
to another in the place I was holding

"Sewer of Lies"

Licking the powder  
off butterfly wings  
And pulling the wings  
off of flies -  
Such were your games,  
Betrayer of Hopes;  
just how  
does a butterfly  
cry?
Did it make you laugh,  
oh Lover of Tears;  
Did it tickle your heart  
of iron?  
Tell me, oh tell me,  
Betrayer of Hopes,  
Tell me,  
oh Sewer  
of Lies!
"Candlelight"

Dancing,
swaying,
flickering,
waverning -
A candle in the dark.
Wax in turpid rivulets
ever-so-slowly weep
Shadows are long
and dance as one;
my dream-time
phantom waltz

"Your Tears"

These are the tears
you never cried,
so I
have shed them
for you

Upon these leaves
they spatter,
released;
Falling, not far,
behind you

"Neverwhere"

When the past is cast
of unborn dreams
And the future
our memories eat;
When the sky does fall,
like gossamer scarves,
And the air
runs thick, like tar;
When time itself
is torn at the seams
And we walk
through holes in space;
When heretofore
hereafter greets,
Neverwhere
is the place

"There No More"

There no more
in loving arms,
your heart
unto me
beating
"Myth-Making"

So many men have learned to speak,
But I have learned to scream.
My words are birds with rocket packs
That burst after they sing.

I paint my hands that I might leave
A mark on all I touch,
But only when my hands have not
The means to see it crushed.

I swallow clouds when I inhale
Because I breathe so deep.
I violate myself so much
That Mother Nature weeps.

I found a way to misbehave
That made the Devil blush,
Then gave myself to slavery
'Cause it was generous.

I've smooshed the hands that I have shook
And crumbled spines with hugs;
I'd heap upon you treasure 'till
You're buried in my love.

I drowned a man who said that he
Would like to quench his thirst,
And fed the children candy 'till
They vomitted or burst.

I trapped a helpless maiden in
A tower on the moon,
Then surrounded her with monsters
I'd booby-trapped with nukes.

Forget the branch, I'll fell a tree
And use it for a cane.
When I'm too old, I think I'll blow
Myself with a grenade.

I smash concrete beneath my feet
With every step I take.
I would that you'd remember me,
If only with your hate.
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Returning"

Electric eyes,
naked desire,
rogue hearts
and unbridled souls
Midnight rainbows,
sacred sin,
blind gods
and confessionals lost

"Never You Know"

Never you know my pink,
nor my taste of summer rain;
Never you know the feel
of silk upon my skin;
Never you know the music
as heard by my own ears;
For such words as we agree upon
reflect as broken mirrors

"Moontides"

Of moontides ever rising
To the softest lapping of waves
Silver-tumbling sands chasing cold waters
White foam foresworn to earth return,
As augured disappear thereunder
Soft gurglings portend a rising within
Of moontides to follow thereafter
Midnight skies bend to celestial winds,
Billowing clouds, by frame, move faster
The axioms are spun, the moontides have gone,
Returning forever whereafter

"White Waters"

White waters are upon me,
Ankles tethered to Hell,
Stone heart, my heavy burden,
Iron beads the winds do hurl

My bleary eyes grow tired;
No more of purchase sought.
My groping hand falls from the sky -
Empty,
and it was

"Sorrow"

Sorrow -
is the only word
Sorrow -
stands alone
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"In Your Eyes"

Once I saw myself
    in your eyes;
Nowhere else
    did I wish to be,
But no more do I know
    of where I am,
For your eyes
    are empty of me

"Memories"

How far from me
    they have flown
      upon the wings of time

"In Leaves"

Ah... the white-washed memory;
Is that laughter
    about the edge?
Jumping into a pile of leaves
    that my father
      had raked
        and left

Untitled

For years I was a feather
    stuck upon the leaves,
      fighting the winds
        that would claim me -
It was you that set me free

"In Your Heart"

You covered me,
    like darkness;
Beyond you
    I could not see
Now I am lost
    in the ways
      of your heart
And ever
    will I be

"Smoke and Mirrors"

Smoke and mirrors,
    games of heart,
      grand illusions
        of love
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"A Fool"

Be once,
    be twice,
        be thrice
            a fool;
How ever we do cry!

Be once,
    be twice,
        be thrice
            a fool;
Forever 'till we die.

"Driftwood"

Ever as driftwood
    upon the sea;
        ever of land
            not finding

"Beginnings"

Tiny hands
    that hold
        a finger
And hearts
    that hold
        the world

"Chasing Butterflies"

Like a child
    chasing butterflies,
        or a feather
            upon the breeze;
With such a heart
    did I give chase
        to the dream
            that was you
                and me

"Day Star"

The Day Star shines,
    marooned by the light;
        for eons
            and eons
                so lonely
We were naught but children,
Building empires in the sand;
How we fought as the tides would wash them away
Over and over again

Ah, but we were heroes!
Let fly the mudballs of war!
I remember the rocks you hid within;
We were but children then

"Where My Words Have Gone"
I know where my words have gone, but I do not wish to follow them. And yet, I must, though I fear that I will lose myself in the finding; that the words will overwhelm me, as a singular passion crowds out all experience, save that of its own. In the end, I do not know if he loved me. Maybe he disowned me and was, like God, indifferent to my pain. But it does not really matter. No. I loved him as he walked toward me and I loved him as he walked away.

There is a strange light I cast upon those I love. They are backlit with such brilliance that they themselves are lost. Eclipsed. And yet, each silhouette was distinct... Now? Now I miss those shadows, though I don't know how I miss the absence of light - a thing that never really was.

I have found that secret place where my words were hiding. I am there now, only there are no words. There is nothing. No; not even that. I suppose that there never really was.

"You Speak"
You speak, but I am not listening. I hear your thoughts as I hear the mumblings of a lover's dream - so many elastic words of sleep half-formed, a monotone drull of static white noise. Yours is an exercise in futility, an etching of meaningless symbols upon soundless waves... waves that break upon the shores of my mind and vanish on riptides into an ocean of obscurity. It was better that you had not spoken. Even your words are not your own; they fly from the shadows of yesterday and you spit your colors upon the echo of their wings. But they are not your own. You are the skipping record of a demented parrot who thought himself free. Why do I acknowledge you? If I pretend that you are original, will you do the same with me? Oh, the truth is insufferable. And so, I acknowledge you; yes, I nod and feign interest, all the while waiting... waiting for the eaters of sound to swallow your words. Never too soon will they come. Never too soon will they come...
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Ever, My Love"

I feel you though my body's numb -
uncaged my spirit flies...
I see you though the shadow falls
and through the blackest night:

I taste your lips, like Heaven's breath,
though drowned in ocean storms.
The deep blue sea's embrace does seem
to hold me like your arms.

I hear you though the thunder rolls,
as dream-speak clouds unpent.
Though Hell's own wind my back would bend,
there wafts my lover's scent.

"In the Shadow of a Rainbow"

I stood in the shadow of a rainbow and it shattered. Shards rained down, like Heaven's glass, and beauty pierced my eyes. I wept tears of blood; my heart's own pulse, and how I wept alone. Even now, I am the world's first man; there are none to comfort me, no shoulders to lean upon. When I was born I began to scream... but I am the babe without a mother's breast. My words are all meaningless because there is no one to hear them. I light fires by night that I might see the shadows that are my friends. I have tried to get close to them, to hold them, but they vanish in my hands. I opened my heart to them to show them what's inside. It was darkness. A darkness to blot out the sun. Even shadows can not abide a world without light. So they disappeared. In the darkness, there was a voice. What language it spoke; I do not know. I pulled the shards from my eyes. I don't know how it was that I ever saw the shadows. "Forgive me. I am mad!" I cried. "Please. Please do not leave me!" I wept. And there was silence. Maybe there was no voice. But what does it mean if I chased myself away? There are only tears; tears welling from the very bowels of Nature herself. All roads end in pain. Somewhere there was a rainbow. Yes. Yes, that is how it all began. The rainbow cast its shadow over me. Now I am blind, and the memory of happiness doesn't feel very much like happiness at all.

"Evergreen Time"

To the legs of red wine,
the metrinome weighed high,
cigarette ashes
growing longer
and longer
"The Grupits"

Lone grupits dwell in wishing wells —
under the arc of dreams —
Bewinged horned frogs with peg-toothed maws,
waiting on magic treats

When from the thumb a coin is sprung,
the eager grupit leaps.
A forked tongue flicks, licking the wish,
above the water's reach

Wishes that break water do take
and with the Fates set sail.
If you see heads, grupits have fed;
tails and grupits have failed

Some casters gift a tribute wish,
or toss two at a time;
Some dazzle wits with lightning flicks,
or wait 'till dead of night

Don't taunt a grupit in its haunt,
for this is what you'll find:
His is the Curse of Better-Worse —
your wish turned on its side

"The Color of Evil"

I am the darkness that swallows your dreams;
The widowing hand halting graveward fiends.
Mine was the monster of your childhood fears —
The breaker of halos, the maker of tears.

So fell our moments in memoric holes —
The fissures of mind, the void betwixt worlds.
I trampled your heroes, melted your toys,
And lured the demons that eat little boys.

I drowned your soul garden before it could grow
And spit at you words that blackened your hope.
All that was holy I covered in mud,
But won't you hold me and tell me I'm loved?

"The Weight"

I watched as my lover
danced off on the wind,
while the weight of my shadow
bound me to land
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Everfall"

All laughterless smiles and ether-eyed trysts
With yesterday's angels in vinyl jackets.
All stonebud roses of crumbling lovedust
And drip-drear moments to smells of stale musk.

The sickening stars fall from sullen skies -
The forgotten gods commit suicide.
While fire lance sunbeams burn our cloud-cupped dreams,
I drift down stone rivers unto wakeless sleep.

"Your Heart"

Your heart
beats for me
when mine
skips a beat
And yeilds
the colors
for my palette
of dreams

We're spun
like the thread
of one
unbroken knot -
A single
sweet thought
in the mind
of God

"I Wonder If..."

I wonder if you love me as much as I love you. If so, we'll probably squeeze eachother so hard that our heads will burst. Only we won't die because we'll be afraid of letting one another go. So we'll just walk around, holding eachother's hands, oblivious to the world around us. People will look at us and say, "Oh my God! That is disgusting!" But we won't even know it. Eventually, they'll push us off a cliff because they can't bear the sight of us. But we'll just hold onto each other and hope that we fall hard enough that they can't tell our remains apart; that we can't tell ourselves apart. Only then will we die. Only then will we let go.

"Empty"

Unto this haggard countenance;
Bruised eyes and forelorn soul.
Herein my space - vacuity;
In mirrors? A blackened hole.
"As I Exhale"

Smoke in layers on liquid airs,
   drifting, settling
Dust motes by broken sunbeams rise,
   glittering, tumbling, disappearing
Undulating bars of light do play
   by windows streaming,
   through darkness piercing
Blue-gray wisps caressing, soothing -
   thousands of little shadow wars
   of disembodied forms,
   rising, falling, dissipating
Ethereal landscapes shudder...
   shudder to breath my own
Pale desert horizons in twilight eternal;
   before, betwixt, behind
Into one another converging,
   reforming,
   of hold releasing
White-capped waves on pellucid waters
Indolent tides upon viscous air,
   tendrils pulling,
   stretching
Lolling by in slow relief,
Relief, as I exhale

"Take of Me"

Take of me my tired eyes;
No more do I wish to see

I have struggled, I have bled,
Crawled forth on broken knees...
So too have I gazed upon
What no man desires to see

So take of me my breath;
No more do I wish to breathe

"Midnight Fire"

Into the embers smoldering...
A montage of disembodied forms -
Theatre of colors flit and dance;
Gentle maelstrom upon the hearth

Last vestiges of a midnight fire,
Your tender melody softly haunts.
Whisper to me your lull-a-bye
And cradle me in your warmth
"A Sad Poem"

You have in your hands a mystical lense -
A waygate to where letters have faces...

Some wither like old rose petals that fall
From the place that they held on the pages.
While others are found sitting upside-down -
The transcendent and idiot-sages.

They're teaching strange things about what it means
To be lettered amidst meaningless words.
Their students, you'll find, hang themselves from lines
"Cause neverafter was thought less absurd.

Still others have said, "The Poet is dead!
We're abandoned to the worst of our fears!"
They were lost and caught in heart-wracking sobs;
Drowned in puddles of their inky black tears.

Some sit there quiet; born mute and silent -
They are sounds that will never be spoken.
The harshest are ones that scratch at the tongue,
Like a promise that's made to be broken.

A few fall as soft as feathers dislodged
From a dove that a shotgun has clouded;
Alighting in deaths macabre pirouettes
'Till a breath touch wherever they're grounded.

"Lady of Tears"

Oh Bringer of Darkness, Lady of Tears,
the sound of your shadow has roused my fears
Like struggling dreams in a tarpit, I sink;
a letter unwritten in Hel's own ink

The wolves of time gather fast at my heels,
feeding on moments that I failed to feel
Upon your cold breast, you smothered my breath;
layers of darkness are all that is left

White lightning once raced, like electric lace,
through holes in heaven that questioners make
And colors once sprayed your garden of hate,
though black is the heart I beat in today

"Master Thief"

If I could steal but a grain of sand
from the hourglass of time,
This moment would last forever
and never would I say goodbye
Brandon Landreth, CDC# AG7347

"Release"

I scaled the breast of a giantess;
Lo! I climbed her teat!
Hereupon I shed my garments;
No one watches. I am free.

I raise my eyes unto the sky,
Let forth a primal scream.
My knees give out from under me
And I begin to weep.

"Mists"

Lambent is the sultry dance
of mist upon still waters
The soft, slow, gentle caress
by tongues of moonclouds felled
Swirling to a breath of breeze,
white tendrils stretch and pull
Like phantom silver lilies
when flames give up to smoke
Slowly ways are parting,
as soft as gassamer webs,
Linger, like the fingers
of two lover's last farewells

"The Magic of Soulflower"

While breathing the steam that rose from Death's dream,
The floorboards melted, like wax unto flame.
I fell through a hole - a quicksand of souls -
And rose amidst legions of Netherworld ghouls.

A phantom garden there swayed without breeze,
Near Looking-Glass Lake - a mirror serene.
I walked among flowers that vanished like mist
And touched dry waters wherein thorn met wrist.

Oh thither blood welled and the hag-child, Hel,
Held forth a rose seed upon which it fell!
"The soulflower seed does quicken," said she,
"A bridge from this side of eternity."

"Awake yon sleeper. Find your gatekeeper;
The gift of guardian magic to leave her.
The familiar guards whomever the ward;
With prudence bequeath your soul's doorless door."
Listen. Can you hear the wet and shattered nails of Happiness, scraping with futility, cracking upon the laughing bricks of the House of Time? Feel. Feel the thorny maw of Despair tugging at your tattered soul, crowding your way and fixing you with the vacant stare of the lightless dead. Look! Look upon the black face of Hope - that thin wasted creature unto which you toss those sweet tender morsels of your unborn dreams. How he sits upon his worthless treasures of heart and bleeds your fuzzy little moments! That. That is your name dribbling from their slack-jawed mouths; that is the phantom word resting upon their breathless lips.

Meet me at the Gates of Oblivion. Already you stand upon the Road to Nowhere, paving your way with answerless questions. Oh, I see you coddling your useless powers in private; scorning the wretched masses that mill about you, probing the air with their emotional antennae. They are not worthy of your secrets. Open your hand and let fall your wilted flower of love! Dance with me amidst the flickering tongues of shadow flame; our burning souls in silent waltz, parting like cobwebs upon the breeze, drifting on unfelt pleasures evermore... evermore the comfort of clouds.

"Innocence Lost"

The cooling embers, the innocence lost;
The unbraided promise of childhood trust -
I remember the pup that I would but hug;
The soul-rending crush, the growling, the blood.

My baptismal scream from a poison spring;
The shadow-washed eyes drawn to things unseen -
How the moon dust glowed on my altar of hope
Where superheroes lay, smashed under stone.

"A Mirror Folded"

My heart is a mirror folded -
Dewdrops on an infinite web;
Forever of others holding
And having naught of itself.

I am the dark whereon night falls.
I am the day that falls on light.
I have hated enough to taste love
And been coward enough to fight.
"All Your Tomorrows"

All your tomorrows will never come. Oh, they will close upon you, seeming to advance into your embrace... but when your hungry fingers move to close upon them, they vanish like willow-the-wisps; soft memories of laughter flirting with the promise of a fevered dream, gone to the stuff of yesterdays without ever passing you by. And so, we give chase. But we don't really want to catch them; they would crumble in our hands like a sacred scroll grown too fragile to touch. We revel in the very elusiveness that leaves our empty hands forever wanting, forever seeking out that calm pocket in an ephemeral wind; that haunted place where a thing once was. See, we don't really want happiness. In secret, we startle our own quarry, swinging our nets at shadows and aiming to miss the mark. Then? Then we feign disappointment, lamenting the could-have-beens and basking in coos, ahs, ohs, and proffered sympathies - the collective comforts of one who mourns. It is no different with your heroes. They too play at make-believe. Yes, they know you are a fraud, an attention whore, a melodramatic public pretender... but they too await their turn at the center of the child's ring and they will expect from you the same insincerity. No, we have not forgotten the unsung moral of Eden: It would not be paradise without misery.

"Painted Faces"

Though I painted your face on the faceless ones, a smile my magic unfolds and softly your visage, like breath on a cloud, shimmers, trembles and swirls. I would gather the mists with my widowing hands, but the tendrils break when I pull. Somewhere I am falling through the bottomless deep, casting visions on an empty world. "My love, my love, come back to me! Alone I stand in the crowds! What am I to weave with unraveling strings, or paint upon vanishing walls? Whenever is dawn without your suntipped fingers upon my soul? And what happens when we grow too tired to dream? Surely, it is then that we fall."

"There's Nothing"

There's nothing but mere reflections, Reflecting all but themselves; Each one is without an essence - Within the other ones held.
"Authenticity"

What if, in the end, they reflected upon your life - its lampless valleys and sunlit peaks - only to remark that you were, without question, entirely unoriginal? Oh, to know that you lived upon borrowed dreams and that even the nightmares you most feared were not your own; that your second-hand beliefs and parroted words had filled your upturned hat with the cold hard change of a painted mime; that your few violent spasms of creativity blossomed unseen in the towering shadow of another's authenticity. And now, standing before the mirror of truth, mired in the quicksands of anonymity, you wipe frantically at the layers of paint only to find that there is nothing at all beneath it. You are without legacy; lost amidst the unremembered forevermore.

Is there no greater curse than obscurity? To be assimilated into the collective mind of the burgeoning hive? Yes, you have tried to go your own way - the loner, the rebel, the geek, the ascetic, the practitioner of things occult. But they gathered about you, didn't they? Chewing at the extraneous growths, gnawing at every last vestige of autonomy until you were all alike. But every so often, there is a growth so malignant, so insidious, that it can not be sterilized: original thought. It threatens the solidarity of the hive, undermining the all-inclusive comfort of the artless inept. How they turn their pretty mouths upon you, gnashing their teeth behind slavering jowls, singularly focused, intent upon your destruction. And so... you turn with them, gnashing your own teeth and pointing the way to the nearest beast. Or do you?

Maybe you build a bomb, or commit suicide, plan a hauntingly grotesque murder or novel atrocity. Why? To shed the stripes of conformity, of course; to be set apart from the droves of personality whores; to be remembered, even if only as an object of communal loathing. So while our lives might be ordinary, monotonous bores, our deaths might be spectacular! How we hate the thought of obscurity. Oh, we'd gladly trade our lives, liberty, power, wealth and happiness for a taste of notoriety, a fleeting glimpse of immortality. It matters not whether we die heroes, villains, or monsters. Both honor and shame taste the same to the worms. "Remember me," the spirit cries, "spare me from oblivion."
"Attics"

Do not speak of whom I may love, for there is no wrong where there is no harm. Your words scatter like smoke unto my breath, lost to me as so many childhood memories. You speak naught of love, but of whom I must hate: and I too am among them. And so, I have no ear for you. Without an enemy, you will turn your saber upon yourself, as have I. As have I...

Oh the things that I have done, from childhood unto now. Upon that face is yesterday; my smile upon that frown. That morning etched upon a night that fears the light of dawn. How I gouged the eyes from my own mind - the eyes of yesterday. But the blind man's comforts always pass and the colors, unwelcome, return. The shadows find no purchase until I draw the curtains of night.

Tell me of forgiveness. How are we to forgive ourselves when we have not been wronged? Forgiveness is not forgetting, nor is it pretending to forget. It is not to say that the victims were unworthy of our goodwill, nor that we were ignorant of such. Forgiveness does not diminish us to idiots or children. What then is forgiveness? It is the recognition of necessity; the understanding that we could not have done otherwise, given all that came before. It is the death of good and evil; the realization that the one-way roads we walk today were paved with the bricks of yesterday.

The babe's balled fist pounds upon its mother's breast. To song returns a scream. She would not mirror me my self-contempt; I screamed and yet she loved me. The mirror she held, of things to come, of things as they were then. I have seen myself in my mother's eyes, trading my nightmares for her dreams. I have seen myself through my mother's eyes; I screamed and yet she loved me.

"Through the Looking-Glass"

Have you ever seen through everything, as through the eyes of God? Where all the world is laughable and nothing is right or wrong? Each man is a comedian, blind to his own jokes; and the more serious his performance, the more hilarious he becomes.
"She Said"

If love were a sound, my world is silent.
"Let me sing for you," she said.
But suffering has left me deaf to your song.
"Then together we shall dance."

It is as though I were on Jupiter; my legs can't bear the weight.
"You bear the lightness of a wish within the mind of God."

This is an emptiness so vast and dark... where once there was a dream.
"Well I have brought a palette," she said, "that you may paint the skies."

The stars have fallen from the skies; the lights are out in heaven. All is darkness evermore. Evermore all is dark.

"Heaven is not so far away," she said, "and the blackest night is full of stars. You see your dreams as from a distance. As from a distance, you see your dreams."

Hope has no feathers with which to fly. It is better that it never take wing.
"And if it sings of love as it falls?" At this, she reached out her hand.

"Happiness"

What is happiness? It is The Absolute, beyond space and time... an immaterial being, the eleventh dimension, an unthinkable thought. It is the meaning of life, a square without the angles or the sides; it is good and evil... It is the love of God. Happiness? It is a thing of which we spoke, without ever really knowing what it was.

"Udumbara's Bloom and Wilt"

I travelled to Heaven
And from there unto Hell.
The scenery never changed.