ABOVE: John Bradin playing bass during a concert by his band, "Threshold".
TRUTH

(SAT--Unshakable Being)

Book One in the "Satchidananda" Trilogy

by John Bradin

January 15th, 2013

John Bradin, #500855, 3A-101
Southeast Correctional Center
300 E. Pedro Simmons Dr.
Charleston, Mo. 63834

Jim and Kay Nelson
1728 E. Elm St. St.
Griffith, IN 46319
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This is a work of fiction. All incidents and dialogue, and all
characters are products of the author's imagination and are not
to be construed as real. When real life historical or public figures
appear, the situations, incidents, and dialogue concerning those
persons are fictional and are not intended to depict actual events
or to change the fictional nature of the work. In all other respects,
any resemblance to persons living or dead is coincidental. All
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give my deepest, most loving and sincere grat-
itude and appreciation, and with all my love, I dedicate this book
to my beautiful, amazing sister, Melody Kay, for her never-ending
love and support throughout all these long, dark years. I couldn't
have done it without her.

I would also like to express by deepest love, devotion, and
thanks to my beloved Guru, Gurumayi Chidvilisananda, without whose
love and grace in my life, none of this would exist. I also thank
all my sisters and brothers in Siddha Yoga for their endless love
and selfless seva on my behalf. I wish a very special "namaste"
to Reverend Kalen McAlester and all my loving friends at "Inside
Dharma" and in the Buddhist and Zen communities.

*Note--The central section of "The Sacrifice" is an excerpt
from the 13th century poet, Rumi, and his epic poem, "The Musnawi".
ABOUT THE BOOK

My blessed Guru, Gurumayi, once said:

A Sufi saint said, "Everything is dependent upon remembering. One does not begin by learning. One starts by rememberance. The distance of external existence and the difficulties of life cause one to forget. It is for this reason God has commanded us to remember."

From the very beginning, I was, somehow, aware of things that I remembered from past lives. I was able to read Superman comic books by the time I was 4 years old. By the time I reached my teens, I began writing poems and music, not because I had learned how, due to the fact that I had very little formal training, but because I remembered how to do these things from previous lives.

I also remembered that I was searching for something; for answers to questions of why I existed, and what was my purpose? Again, it wasn't out of natural curiosity but, rather, because I was commanded to remember, to keep moving inexorably toward the true meaning of my (and everyone's) existence.

This is a document of those rememberences, those memories, and the "difficulties of life" that caused me to forget who I truly am and what I am; the Truth--Unshakeable Being.

In rememberance and honor of my loving mother and step-dad, Rita and Ed Hutson, who I miss very much.

Johnny L. Bradin
January 15th, 2013
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Bradin grew up on the south side of Chicago, and spent his teenage years in the midst of the blues and rock music explosion there. During this period, while being influenced by Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, The Shadows of Knight, and the Cryan' Shames, he began to search for spiritual answers in the literature of Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf, Damien, and Siddhartha, and E. R. R. Eddison's The Worm Ourobouros trilogy.

Attending college at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, his favorite classes were design, under the genius of R. Buckminster Fuller, but he quickly became disenchanted with scholastics, and turned to the more immediate mental transcendence of marijuana and psychedelics. While delivering pizzas in his triple black Cadillac, he met and became fast friends with the great underground FM deejay, Don Bunch, at WTAO-FM, who introduced him to the teachings of Baba Ram Dass, and taught him how to deejay.

John dropped out of college, and a few months later was busted for smuggling pot from Mexico, where he spent several weeks in Timothy Leary's cell in Laredo, Texas. Upon his release from federal prison, John moved to Los Angeles for a year, during which time he worked for Studio Instrument Rentals in Hollywood, and became acquainted with Robin Trower, Dickie Peterson of Blue Cheer, and the magnificent Bonnie Raitt, while working for George Harrison, Keith Moon, and Joe Cocker. Due to an unfortunate accident where all his fingers were broken in the tailgate of a truck by Dennis Coffey (of Scorpio fame), John returned to Illinois, where he learned of his friend Don Bunch's recent death in a car crash.

John's best friend's death caused an emotional cataclysm, resulting in his robbing a bank in a cocaine-fueled rage, ending in a nearly fatal shootout, during which John was shot 3 times in the head at close range and twice in the left leg with a 12-gauge shotgun.

He became the youngest man (at that time) to be sentenced to Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary. During his 15 year sentence, he immersed himself in music and writing (a number of the song-poems herein were written during that time), and John produced the only
song ever recorded professionally at Leavenworth Federal Prison, (a country song by Sonny Bridges which received local and national press) and formed and played in a rock band with Phil Garrido, who is currently imprisoned for the kidnapping of Jaycee Dugard. He also became acquainted with reputed mobsters Joe Bonnano, Nick and Carl Civella, Sammy Norber, Willie Cammisano, Jr., and Woody Harrelsons' dad, Charlie, who lived 4 cells down from him.

Bradin was released on parole after 5 years and tried, unsuccessfully, to live a "normal" life. He married, opened and ran the first and best punk-rock bar in Kansas City (the Downliner), and played guitar and bass in a number of bands, with varying degrees of success. After 7 years, John and his wife divorced, and he moved to the country for a fresh start.

While living on a small farm about 90 miles south of Kansas City, he tried to market a fictional book based on the music industry in the late 1960's called The Cry of the Wolf. His lack of success and ongoing difficulties with his ex-wife plunged him into depression, and he began using drugs again, leading to his re-arrest.

John has continuously asserted that his arrest and convictions were illegal during his twenty-one years in prison, and although he recently received a 2015 release date, he continues to challenge these unlawful convictions, in an effort to clear his reputation.

During his incarceration, he has devoted himself to music, writing, and spiritual understanding which, in 1999, led him to In Search of the Self, the Siddha Yoga correspondence course, which he continues to practice daily under the blessed guidance of his beloved Guru, Swami Chidvilisananda.

John has had a number of his poems and writings published in Inside Dharma, and on the Internet through their website. He is sincerely grateful to the Prison Foundation for publishing Truth (SAT--Unshakeable Being) and to everyone who takes the time to enjoy his musings, and would be delighted to answer any questions or correspondence from anyone, on any subject of interest. Please direct letters to: JOHN BRADIN, #500855, 3A-101, Southeast Correctional Center, 300 E. Pedro Simmons Dr., Charleston, MO. 63834.
"SEARCHIN' FOR HEAVEN"

All my life I've been tried to a cross
wounded by sorrow and pain
I have no place to turn; my tears fall down like rain.
Now I've come to my darkest hour;
I fall down on my knees and pray.
"Oh, lawd almighty, just let me make it one more day."

Sometimes I feel like a fallen angel,
with bloody stains upon my hands... 

I know that I've been searchin' for Heaven;
I've walked down a long, hard road.
And when I finally find my place in Heaven,
your love will save my weary soul.

I climbed on top of the highest mountain,
looked down on a world of woe.
There's no place left to run; there's nowhere left to go.
So won't you reach out and take my hand, child,
and hope that love will find a way.
Sharing love can make this world a better place.

Sometimes I feel like a fallen angel,
with bloody stains upon my hands... 

I know that I've been searchin' for Heaven;
I've walked down a long, hard road.
And when I finally find my place in Heaven,
your love will save my weary soul.

by John Bradin
"THE PASSION AND THE FURY"

Like a choir of angels that's been driven out of Hell;
left alone in a blasphemous world; alone to their own device.
"I know what it's like to be abandoned.", she said, and I
could hear the emptiness in her voice.
She knew what it was to be used and cast aside.

Lightning rips the night with its glory
its power and its rage beyond control
'What are these forces that war inside me
where no intellect can guide me?
It's the Passion and the Fury of my soul...

"Decadence has its own rewards.", smiled the dark-eyed stranger.
Drinking whiskey from a dirty glass, he stared into the mirror behind the bar.
"Music is the ability to communicate directly from soul to soul."
Then I saw his tears.
He was torn between self-loathing and desire.

Lightning rips the night with its glory
its power and its rage beyond control
'What are these forces that war inside me
where no intellect can guide me?
It's the Passion and the Fury of my soul...

"Walk with me." she pleaded. "I don't want to go on alone.
Stay with me, and we'll find Heaven in our own way."
But I don't want to go to Heaven,
and I know I couldn't stay... so I turn around and slowly walk away.
And I swear I'll hear her tears
to my dying day...

by John Bradin

(2)
"THE PASSION AND THE FURY"

There’s a distant sound of thunder that echoes in my brain
like the rush of a speedball; the mixture of heroin and coke.
"If it’s true that art is suffering, then I’m a great artist."
and I heard my own laughter.
I laughed ‘til I cried at what must be life’s cruelest joke.

Lightning rips the night with its glory
its power and its rage beyond control
What are these forces that war inside me
where no intellect can guide me?
It’s the Passion and the Fury of my soul...

by John Bradin

(3)
"SYMPHONY #6: THE DESTROYER SUITE"

I stopped the motors that run the world;

turned out the lights of New York;

I'm sick and tired of this welfare state.

Doesn't anybody want to work?

Who is John Galt?

Atlas shrugged.

There's no future;

Hate is Love.

They say I found the Fountain of Youth;

but I just got tired of men's greed.

I've got no sympathy for the devil, anymore;

I'll just kick back and let it bleed.

You can't get blood out of a rock;

you can't use me anymore.

My ideas are mine, at last.

I've walked away and closed the door.

and closed the door . . .

by John Bradin

(4)
"SYMPHONY #6: THE DESTROYER SUITE"

Who is John Galt?
Atlas shrugged.
There's no future;
Hate is Love.

Where have all your moral standards gone?
What gives you right to what is mine?
Judge not unless you would be judged yourself.
The eyes of justice are now blind.

You can't get blood out of a rock;
you can't use me anymore.
My ideas are mine, at last.
I've walked away, and closed the door.
and closed the door...
and closed the door.

by John Bradin

(5)
"THE BLACK WALL"

So cold and silent, so dark and hard
it stands as a monument to the dead and scarred;
to the B-52's that rained fire from the sky
to the families of the missing who still wonder why.
But pride goeth ever before the fall,
so we lay our hurt pride before the Black Wall.

We fought for God, and Mom, and the American flag,
and the CIA, Standard Oil, and China White skag.
Ruthless lies and needless bloodshed tore this country apart;
Nixon and Agnew killed our spirits and broke our hearts.
"Death Before Dishonor" was our battle call;
Now we lay our tattered honor before the Black Wall.

I lie here in a cold, cold sweat
and relive the nightmares every night.
Hearing the screams of the maimed and dying
smelling bodies burning from the firefight.
I put the barrel of my gun against my temple;
Oh, God, I just wish it was all so simple...

A six pack of beer and a bottle of Jack;
A carton of Marlboro's and a son's Silver Star.
Everyone has their own different way
of living with pain and healing the scar.
So for those who fought and gave their all,
we lay our love and our tears down before
the Black Wall...

by John Bradin
"LADY COCAINE"

The Devil was in her eyes,
a needle was in her arm.
She said she wasn't tellin' me lies;
She said it wouldn't do her no harm.
She told me she could put it down anytime:
she said that lovin' the Lady's no crime.

Oh, you snow white bitch
now she's got the itch.

I watched her growin' older;
I watched her growin' cold.
Lady Cocaine got bolder;
she'd come to steal my womans' soul.
She said the high was now all she wanted;
I could tell by her words she was feelin' quite haunted.

Oh, you ice cold whore
took her soul for a score

I watched her growin' older;
I watched her growin' cold.
Lady Cocaine got bolder;
she'd come to steal my womans' soul.

The Devil was in her eyes
as she lay dead on the floor.
She started out as a sweet, little girl
and ended up as a whore.
But I just can't seem to cry any longer;
and Lady Cocaine is makin' me stronger...

by John Bradin
"LADY COCAINE"

Oh, you snow white bitch
now I've got the itch.
now I've got the itch.
now I've got the ...
itch.

by John Bradin

(8)
There's a quiet wind blowin' across the winter snow
Is this just a dream?
How will it end?
I see the bare trees stirring as I slowly close my eyes...
It's just another day
that I must pretend.

Pretending that it matters,
pretending that I care.
Pretending that I feel the things I don't.
Pretending that I've something
to give, and love to share.
It's close to when I'll just pretend I won't.

Pale sunlight filters through the frosted windows in my room.
I feel so cold inside
that I think I'll die.
I can't remember when I just stopped caring anymore.
It doesn't really matter;
my life's a lie...

Pretending that it matters,
pretending that I care.
Pretending that I feel the things I don't.
Pretending that I've something
to give, and love to share.
It's close to when I'll just pretend I won't.

by John Bradin
Wrap me in a straitjacket
and lock me away
Broken dreams are dangerous as hell.
Burn me at the stake
and get down on your knees and pray
that you never learn this truth
I know so well . . .

They say that love’s a fire, but it won’t melt a heart of ice.
I stand alone and cry
these silent tears.
We each must face the possibility of failure now
and not give in
to overwhelming fear.

Pretending that it matters,
pretending that I care.
Pretending that I feel the things I don’t.
Pretending that I’ve something
to give, and love to share.
It’s close to when I’ll just pretend I won’t.

by John Bradin
(10)
“INNER VIEW”

[BASED ON AN INTERVIEW WITH ROGER WATERS]
OF PINK FLOYD

ARE YOU PUZZLED BY THE LACK OF MORALS IN YOUR PEERS?
I find it easy to blindly believe.

WILL VOODOO HELP US OVERCOME OUR SCHIZOPHRENIC FEARS?
Illusions make it possible to deceive.

Like a nuclear reactor going out of control,
or a shooting star lost in a black hole
there are no answers to the questions
posed by you
in the inner view...

DOES RELIGION HAVE MEANING IN OUR DECADENT LIVES?
Like a reflection in a mirror, I have no soul.

ARE HUMANITARIAN CAUSES IMPORTANT TO YOUR WIFE?
The sum of the parts is less than whole.

And someday the stars will fall out of the sky;
little children will stop wondering
and forget to ask why.
There are no answers to the questions
posed by you
in the inner view...

by John Bradin
"INNER VIEW"

Digital Revolution... no expiation for our high-tech sins
Digital Revolution... he who dies with the most toys wins....

WILL COMPUTERS FINALLY LET US SEE THE DARKSIDE OF THE MOON?
I believe that it's in each and every man.
DO YOU THINK THAT THE END OF THE WORLD IS COMING SOON?
I know that I've been doing all I can.

In the final destruction, the moral malaise

"No Comment" is the only thing
I have to say.
there are no answers to the questions
posed by you
in the inner view...

by John Bradin

(12)
"DARK EYES"

Dark eyes of innocence
they burn you soul with their pain.
Hands that touch what they shouldn’t touch.
Please, Mommy, don’t hurt me again.
Don’t take it so hard,
there’s nothing anyone can do.
Don’t take it so hard;
there’s only one of you.

Thirteen years old, she’s already a rock star.
She’d sell her soul for a piece of ice.
She ran away from the past, and there’s no tomorrows.
Now she’s just another mugshot to Hollywood Vice.
Don’t take it so hard,
there’s nothing anyone can do.
Don’t take it so hard;
there’s only one of you.

Help! Won’t you take my hand
Help! Please try to understand
Help! All I need is a little love.
Help! Please don’t just turn away
Help! I’ll do anything to make you stay
All I need is a little love...

Dark eyes of innocence
but you’re wise beyond your years.
Maybe today death will take you away,
and lift you up from this veil of tears.
Don’t take it so hard,
there’s nothing anyone can do.
Don’t take it so hard;
there’s only one of you.
Dark eyes... don’t hurt the children
Dark eyes... run away again

by John Bradin

(13)
“NO MORE”

There’s a young girl on the front porch,
a widow at the back door.
The woman down the street
really thinks I’m neat.
She’s got the fever,
I’ve got the cure.

Well, I know it comes natural
but one thing’s for sure
Women’ll drain you dry
til the day that you die.
I ain’t wastin’ my time
no more...

I was a young boy ’bout thirteen,
Marleece took me by the hand.
Said, “Come on upstairs now, big boy,
Good lovin’s gonna make you a man.”

Well, I know it comes natural
but one thing’s for sure
Women’ll drain you dry
til the day that you die.
I ain’t wastin’ my time
no more...

by John Bradin
(14)
"NO MORE"

If you keep on usin' your manhood
instead of usin' your brains,
one day you'll wake up and realize
your whole life is down the drain.

Well, I know it comes natural
but one thing's for sure
Women'll drain you dry
'til the day that you die.
I ain't wastin' my time
no more... .

by John Bradin
(15)
"SHE WEARS FLOWERS IN HER HAIR"

And God created Woman just to make trouble for a man,
'cause she does those crazy things that he just doesn't understand.
Bite the apple...kiss the snake.
Our souls are naked...the heavens shake.
And when she shakes her body, you know you don't have a prayer
'cause she walks like an angel
she wears flowers in her hair.

Just like Modigliani and the great painters of the past,
I'd like to capture your beauty and know that it would always last.
Cleopatra...Brigitte Bardot.
Lady Di...Marilyn Monroe.
Intelligence and beauty are qualities extremely rare.
and she walks like an angel
she wears flowers in her hair.

Times never change, things are still the same today.
Pretty woman cross your path, and a man is led astray.
Love and marriage...kids and the wife.
The other woman...the spice of life.
But when you kiss her lips, you just don't seem to care
'cause she walks like an angel
she wears flowers in her hair.

by John Bradin
"LONG AGO & FAR AWAY"

Photographs and memories of the things I left behind,
like cobwebs in the shadows of the corners of my mind.
When I look at them, I remember all the things I wished to say;
but that was then,
way back when
long ago and far away... 

Damn! Your face is familiar. I think I've seen it somewhere before.
Your name is on the tip of my tongue.
You say you think you know me. Are you absolutely sure?
It's hard to understand what I've become.

Lost in the past, I only live for yesterday;
my dreams are only faded memories.
You say that I once loved you,
but that's all behind me now.
That was then,
way back when
long ago and far away...

Look into my eyes, my friend, and tell me what you see.
Some say that they're as cold and dead as ice.
You shudder at the self-inflicted wounds upon my arms,
but you have no idea what I've sacrificed.

What happened to my world where love was innocent and gay?
those dreams are only faded memories.
I can't believe I ever loved,
no matter what you say.
That was then,
way back when
long ago and far away...

by John Bradin
(17)
"LONG AGO & FAR AWAY"

Photographs and memories of the things I left behind,
like cobwebs in the shadows of the corners of my mind.
When I look at them, I remember all the things I wished to say;
but that was then,
way back when
long ago and far away... 

They say that man can't live on love; of that I have no doubt.
My love is dead, but still I suffer on.
You'd think that God would laugh, and find some pity for a fool
who lives on dreams and hopes that long have gone.

Reality's a shattered kaleidoscope of pain;
our dreams are only faded memories.
You never can go back to
the way things were before.
but that was then,
way back when
long ago and far away... 

by John Bradin

(18)
"STRANGER"

I stand alone in the doorway of a cottage on the lonely heath,
staring out into the darkness and the bone-chilling rain.
The smoke from my soaked cigarette disappears into the mist;
I'm an outsider to the world of men as if I bore the mark of Cain.

I'm a stranger to my lovers
I'm a stranger to myself.
Dancing to the Siren's Song of danger
I'll pay the piper in Hell.

The cobblestones gleam wetly in the dim light of the alleyway;
I stagger drunkenly, screaming and cursing at the night.
I feel as if I'm drowning in a pool of my own blood;
as I go down for the last time, my hand reaches out for the light.

I'm a stranger to my family
I'm a stranger to myself.
Dancing to the Siren's Song of danger
I'll pay the piper in Hell.

Where do you look when you've lost all your dreams of hope?
When you open your eyes all you see is pain.
Smile one last wistful smile at the irony of it all,
and drag the jagged blade across your vein...

I haunt the streets of London like the spirit of some long-dead wraith.
Big Ben tolls twelve times; I hear the saddened howls of a distant dog.
I see the lights of the city at night, but there's no welcome hearth or home.
I pull the collar of my jacket up around my throat, and vanish in the fog.

I'm a stranger to all my friends.
I'm a stranger to myself.
Dancing to the Siren's Song of danger
I'll pay the piper in Hell.

by John Bradin

(19)
"FLAMING ARROW"

I watched you cry as I said “good-bye.”
Your tear-rimmed eyes were like stained glass
in an abandoned church.
They’d seen too much, and there was just a touch
of sadness reflected through
a glaze of dirt.

Don’t get me wrong; I guess I’ve always known I loved you.
Don’t ask me why; but I knew it was wrong from the start.
So say what you have to say, then turn and walk away
‘cause your love is a flaming arrow through my heart.

You thought you knew a trick or two.
But who was fooling who is a question
that hangs between us like a veil.
Passions burn so intensely they defy common sense
but there’s too much pretense
in this trick of the tale.

Don’t get me wrong; I guess I’ve always known I loved you.
Don’t ask me why; you’ve known the answer from the start.
So play the mind games you must play, then please just go away
‘cause your love is a flaming arrow through my heart.

You burned down the mission.
You breached the temple walls
where I hide my sins.
You burned down the mission,
and I can never, ever trust
in love again.

by John Bradin
(20)
"FLAMING ARROW"

There's a fire in the sky over the city at night.
It casts a ghostly light on the emotions
you choose to display.
I'm in a sleep that burns, and my dreams all turn
into nightmares I live out
all during the day.

Don't get me wrong; I'll never regret having loved you.
Don't ask me why it's time to try to live apart.
Don't make it worse than it is; give me one last, parting kiss
'cause your love is a flaming arrow through my heart.

by John Bradin

(21)
"THE ANSWER"

You said that you were searching for someone
who could take you where you'd never been before.
Your mama told you not to worry about it;
that love is just an opening door
to a world where innocence is left behind us,
and happiness is just a state of mind.

Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
The answers to the future are within.
Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
You will never, ever have to cry again.

They say that there are always greener pastures
just waiting for you on the other side.
But when I look at you I feel your inner sadness
that the beauty of your smile just cannot hide.
Please don't fall into a trap like all the others
who believe that things can bring joy to your soul.

Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
The answers to the future are within.
Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
You will never, ever have to cry again.

It's alright to believe in dreams
the hope of new tomorrors gets us
through the lonely night.
Don't trouble with the plans and schemes
into every darkness there will shine
a guiding light.

by John Bradin
"THE ANSWER"

Take my hand and walk with me awhile.
Life don't turn out the way we'd like to pretend.
All the answers that you're looking for
are right there, if you'll take a look within.
You must decide what is right for you
'cause you pay for all your choices in the end.

Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
The answers to the future are within.
Don't turn away. Look into my eyes.
I'm always here when you need a friend.
I'm always here when you need a friend.

by John Braden
(23)
"LEARNING TO LOVE."

Yesterday is dead and gone;
tomorrow never comes.
Today is all the time we have
to do what must be done.
Today I looked inside myself
to learn what I must do.
I learned that I must love myself
before I can love you.

And I'm learning...learning...to love.
And I'm learning...learning...to love.

My best friend died five years ago;
last night I heard his voice.
He said, "Johnny, I want you to understand
that you really do have a choice.
Be strong, and live with honor;
you know this life is just a test.
Just be yourself, and play your songs
and always do your best."

by John Bradin

(24)
"LEARNING TO LOVE"

And I'm learning...learning...to love.

And I'm learning...learning...to love.

Love is letting others
be what they want to be.

Let their spirits shine on;
share their energy.

Be thankful for the blessings
that come to us each day,
and plant seeds of love for tomorrow
by learning to love today.

And I'm learning...learning...to love.

And I'm learning...learning...to love.

by John Bradin

(25)
"ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE"

Took a walk down by the ocean,
low tide's comin' in.
Saw your reflection in the water;
you were my love, you were my friend.
It's been ten years this winter
since I last saw your face.
I can't forget that I once loved you . . .
another time, another place.

Gemini, you drive a hard bargain.
Gemini, someday we'll meet again.

A thousand nights or a thousand years
don't make no difference to me.
I'm gonna keep on loving you
'til the end of eternity.
You touched my soul the way that no one else
could ever fill that empty space.
I can't forget that I once loved you
another time, another place . . .

Gemini, you drive a hard bargain.
Gemini, some day we'll meet again.

by John Bradin

(26)
"KING OF THE DAMNED"

I slip from the oasis like a serpent in the sand.
A sultry, crescent moon casts its eclipse on the sudan.
Three thousand years ago, there were no jets over the Nile;
I haven't laid entombed for all these years to be defiled.
And now I walk again, and all the gods of Egypt smile...

"I am alive!" I hear the wind cry...
"I am alive!" I will never die...

I was the High Priest of the Pyramid, a rider on the storm.
I sired and died a hundred times before your Christ was born.
I cast out all the Caesars and I made the Jews my slaves;
gave the asp to Cleopatra, then I danced upon her grave.
And the everlasting desert shimmers like the ocean's waves.

"I am alive!" I hear the wind cry...
"I am alive!" I will never die...

My heart is made of ice, but there's a burning in my soul.
'til I regain the love I lost, I never can be whole.
But how can you reclaim a love that never more shall be?
I gaze at her blank stare as she lies there silently.
And until the end of time I know, I'll never more be free.

"I am alive!" I hear the wind cry...
"I am alive!" I will never die...
"I am alive!" I hear the wind cry...
"I am alive!" I will never die...

by John Bradin

(27)
"THE HEART OF PARADISE"

Let the flowers of doom bring me eternal dreams
while the white lady slowly closes my eyes.
I know that tonight I'll sleep with the gods,
in the heart of paradise.

Somewhere out there in the naked city streets,
amidst the garbage and the human waste
walks an artist who searches for beauty
but he finds only pain, so he acquires a taste
for blues, the music of the black man's torment
and jazz that freezes like a soul on ice,
but he knows that somewhere in this living hell
beats the heart of paradise.

Art is an imitation of the human condition
so he uses his own blood for the color red,
to paint a picture of his own self-destruction
that reflects the torment from which he has fled
to the bottom of the bottle of self-righteous whiskey,
and the emptiness of cocaine, that solitary vice,
but he lives on the hope that in this living hell
beats the heart of paradise.

by John Bradin

(28)
"THE HEART OF PARADISE"

Our heroes have always been those poor, damned souls
whose courage somehow overcame their pain.
True art and true feelings have no place in this world
where corporations sell shit for commercial gain.

You can hear the wail of Bird’s lonely sax
in the cry of a homeless child.
You can feel the screams of Jimi’s guitar
when you hear of some lost teenager gone wild.
We paint our own pictures on the canvas of life;
the critics determine their price,
but I live on the hope that in this living hell
I’ll find the heart of paradise.

Let the flowers of doom bring me eternal dreams
while the white lady slowly closes my eyes.
I know that tonight I’ll sleep with the gods,
in the heart of paradise.

by John Bradin

(29)
"DADDY WON'T BE COMING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS"

Hello, honey. How ya doin'? Well, I'm not doin' too bad.
I sold the house; don't see much of our old friends.
Guess I'll spend Christmas with my Mom and Dad.
Well, how bout you? Yeah, I'm glad to hear it.
You're going to his family up in Maine?
No, I'll just sit around and have myself a few drinks,
and try to take the edge off all this pain.

oooh, oooh...oooh, oooh
oooh, oooh...oooh, oooh

Did you get the card? And you got the money?
I'm glad it all worked out ok.
I just want our baby to have a nice Christmas.
I guess that's all I want to say.
No, don't hang up yet; please, just wait a minute.
Lord, I miss the sound of your voice.
I just want to say how sorry I am;
I know you didn't have any choice.

Now Daddy won't be coming home for Christmas,
but Santa will bring presents anyway.
Now Daddy won't be coming home for Christmas, anymore
but I love you...
more than words can say.

oooh, oooh...oooh, oooh
oooh, oooh...oooh, oooh

by John Bradin
(30)
“DADDY WON’T BE COMING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS”

Let me talk to the baby. Hi there, little cupcake. This is your daddy on the line. Yeah, I know you’ve got a new daddy now; it’s nice to hear things are going fine. What’cha want for Christmas? A new Barbie doll? How ‘bout some new clothes for school? Merry Christmas, baby. I’ve got to hang up now, before I start crying like some old fool..

Now Daddy won’t be coming home for Christmas, but Santa will bring presents anyway. Now Daddy won’t be coming home for Christmas, anymore but I love you... more than words can say.

oohh, oohh... oohh, oohh
oohh, oohh... oohh, oohh
[Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells... Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells]

(SPOKEN)

Hey, Joe. How’s it goin’? Merry Christmas! Yeah, thanks. Let me have a drink. Sure, sure, buddy. What’s a matter? Holidays got you down? Yeah... This’ll be the first year without the wife and kid. Uh, Joe? Better make that a double. Sure, pal... oohh, oohh... oohh, oohh

oohh, oohh... oohh, oohh
[Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells... Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells]
[Silent Night, Holy Night... Silent Night, Holy Night]

by John Bradin

(31)
"APOCALYPSE."

The Catholics build their monuments to last a thousand years
and this great land, America, was built on the blood, sweat, and tears
of immigrants who sold their souls, so their children might live free,
but they forgot the meaning of freedom
while they built for security.

If you see me in a dark corner
with my whiskey and my fags,
go across the street to that sleazy hotel;
tell the clerk to pack my bags.
And remember to tell the bellboy
to forget about his tips,
’cause I’m the man whose seen the plan
for the coming
Apocalypse... .

I was born with a silver spoon under my nose,
and more than I could use.
‘But what about the poor children who
were born to live the blues?
You see them on a dark corner, under stairs,
and in packing crates.
Divorce, heroin, and murder are their
cruel and violent fates.

If you see me in a dark corner
where the smoke gets in my eyes,
don’t worry about me, brother,
it’s not for me that I cry.
And remember to tell my enemies
not to make any slips,
’cause I’m the man whose seen the plan
for the coming
Apocalypse... .

by John Bradin

(32)
"APOCALYPSE"

There's a bridge over troubled water
that will get me to the other side.
You reach out your hand to help me across,
but I turn away and hide.
I wish I could get down on my knees,
and strip away my foolish pride
and let your love wash my sins away
with the oceans' tides.

What if God had built our souls to last for eternity?
And this short life is just one step on the road to destiny?
We keep on seeking answers when
we don't know the questions to ask,
And kill the love that's in our hearts,
and hide our feelings behind a mask.

So if you see me in a dark corner,
so scared and all alone;
don't worry about me, brother,
you've got problems of your own.
This stupid game is over;
I'm cashin' in my chips.
'cause I'm the man whose seen the plan
for the coming
Apocalypse....

by John Bradin

(33)
"WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?"

Give me a life of cruelty,
give me a life of pain.
Crush all the spirit right out of me
until I go insane.

But I chose the choices I’ve made now,
and I don’t blame anyone but me.

What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?
What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?

Should I view my past with anxiety,
with the taste of regret in my mouth?
Should I stand like a man, as hard as steel
until the weight of the world just smashes me down?

But right or wrong doesn’t matter now,
and the end no one can foresee:

What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?
What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?

You can’t change horses in the middle of the stream,
and you can’t go against the flow.
Beat your head against the wall;
it feels so good when you stop.
Believe me, baby, I know...

by John Bradin
WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

Well, you think I should be remorseful
but I don't give a damn what you feel.
Every man must find his reality
and I won't compromise my ideals.

I will stand on the choices I've made now;
I have to live on my faith in me.

What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?
What have I learned? What have I learned?
What have I learned?

by John Bradin

(35)
"PLAIN"

She was plain... but you could tell she knew how to survive.
She was plain... you could see the pain in her eyes.
She had a heart filled with good intentions,
and sense enough to come out of the rain,
but she was plain.

She never heard the words, "you're beautiful" in her whole life.
Nobody stopped to whistle when she walked on by.
She gets up every morning and asks the mirror on the wall,
but she knows in her heart she'll never be the fairest of them all.

She made up her mind when she was a young child
that she was going to lead an interesting life.
So she worked her way through college, instead of trying to catch a man.
Now she's happy on her own, but her mother doesn't understand.

She was plain... but you could tell she knew how to survive.
She was plain... you could see the pain in her eyes.
She had a heart filled with good intentions,
and sense enough to come out of the rain,
but she was plain.

Why must we always take the superficial view?
If a person's pretty, then they must have a good soul.
We always overlook the simple beauty
of a heart of gold.
We somehow disregard those special few.

by John Bradin

(36)
"PLAIN"

She takes the world on her own terms.
She doesn't give a damn for the opinion of fools.
She's been lied to and hurt before, but it only made her wise,
and you can tell that she thinks being plain is just her disguise.

She was plain... but you could tell she knew how to survive.
She was plain... you could see the pain in her eyes.
She had a heart filled with good intentions,
and sense enough to come out of the rain,
but she was plain.

Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful

Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful

Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful

Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful
Plain... so beautiful

(FADE OUT)

by John Pradin

(37)
THE SACRIFICE

Lying in the space that hides the sadness of the world;
no one sees my pain, or knows
the reasons why I cry.
All they see is a pretty face, a touch of grace,
a sweet, sad smile.
But I have paid the price for learning
how to live these lies.

And how much longer 'til the day
when I just cannot face myself,
and all the memories of the truth
lie dead upon the floor?
When will my heart burst into flame
from the evil that's inside my soul?
Maybe death will bring me peace and quiet
once more... 

*I died as a mineral, and rose as a plant,
I died as a plant, and rose again an animal,
I died as an animal, and rose a man.
Why then should I fear to become less by dying?
I shall die once again as a man,
To rise an angel, perfect from head to foot.
Again, when I suffer dissolution as an angel,
I shall become what passes
the conception of man.

by John Bradin

(38)
THE SACRIFICE

Silence is the cry of love that screams across my mind,
and I must always hide my anger
and my bitter tears.
To be a man is to walk alone, and know how madness feels;
to ramble on an aimless path
and never show my fears.

When will my past catch up to me
and finally cut my own throat
to pay me back for all the hurt
and evil that I've done?
But when I'm gone, remember
that I once gave love to you
and send my soul in sacrifice
unto the burning sun.
Please give my soul in sacrifice unto
the burning sun...

by John Bradin

(39)
PARADISE LOST
by John Bradin

"Let me explain what courage is.\textquotedblright, said the Devil to Billy D. "It's not a question of cowardice, as you can plainly see. Now, the ignorant might easily conclude it was a fatal strategy, or what old William Shakespeare would call a 'comedic tragedy'. But, you know, I've had my fill of all that good and evil crap, and, boy, I'm here to tell you that blind faith is just a trap. Yes, I guess the sword is broken, and no matter what the cost; we're on opposite sides of the fence, now, and Paradise is lost."

Billy D. lit up a cigarette, and leaned back in his chair; he kind of squinted up his eyes, so it wouldn't look as if he stared. "You know that I can smell your fear, and I can tell your heart is scared; I believe I know what you came for, but I really just don't care. You want to sell your immortal soul, and you want to make a deal: well, my dealin' days are over son, and what I want, I steal. Yes, I guess the sword is broken, and no matter what the cost, you never can go back again, for Paradise is lost."

I don't regret anything I've ever done;
I just regret the things I didn't do.
Don't try to tell me what's wrong with me;
try to figure out what's wrong with you.
Paradise ain't no place or thing:
it's just a state of mind
where ignorance is truly bliss,
and God is deaf, dumb, and blind. . .

by John Bradin

(40)
PARADISE LOST

Billy D. just sat there in silence, thinking he'd truly lost his mind, then he looked up and smiled at the Devil, and thanked him for his time. "Don't worry 'bout nothin', Billy," the Devil said, "to want things ain't no crime. No one knows how things will turn out: maybe we'll meet again, sometime. See, the only thing you have to fear is the fear inside yourself. Each one of us is his own saviour, and everyone creates his own hell." The Devil stood up slowly, and as he walked toward the door, he whispered over his shoulder, "Oh, yea, there's just one little thing more. Yes, I guess the sword is broken, but no matter what the cost, Me and God are the same damned thing, and Paradise is lost..."

by John Bradin

(41)
"A SOLDIER’S SONG"

"Spoken like a soldier, son." the priest said, then turned away.

"He'll be among the blessed ones upon the Judgement Day."

And then he took his sacred cross, and held it to the sky;

he looked down at the bloody chest, and a tear rolled from his eye

and he said, "Ours is not to reason why, ours is just to do

or die..."

There was a letter in his pocket. It read, "My dear and loving John,

I never meant to hurt you, but when you get this I'll be gone.

You know I've been so lonely; now I've met another man.

I hope that you'll forgive me, and I hope you'll understand."

I looked down at the dead soldier, and I breathed a heavy sigh

for ours is not to reason why, ours is just to do

or die...

Men lead lives of quiet desperation,

taking orders instead of seeking truth.

They leave their loves behind in frustration,

while Death comes and steals away their youth.

by John Bradin

(42)
A SOLDIER'S SONG

"Spoken like a soldier, son," the priest whispered in my ear.

"It's not unusual at a time like this to feel a little fear."

“Well, I've lived a good life, Father, and I'm not afraid to die,
but there's just one thing before I go. I hope you'll tell me why... tell me why we fight these stupid wars for rich men who sell lies?"

He looked down at my bloody chest, and a tear rolled from his eye and he said, “Ours is not to reason why, ours is just to do or die...”
"FLESH & BLOOD"

Jesus died upon the cross for the love of his fellow man.
If he died to save the world, then I just don't understand
why the world is so much worse? Lord, there's got to be another way.
Here we stand with our heads in the sand, waitin' on the Judgement Day.

Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again
Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again

I dreamed I saw a new storm risin', sweeping across the land,
where everyone would be as brothers, joining hand in hand.
The poor and helpless would have a home, and more than enough to eat.
They'd have a job to be proud of, good clothes, and shoes on their feet.

Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again
Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again

by John Bradin

(44)
"FLESH & BLOOD"

Flesh and blood are all that makes us human;
everyone's entitled to his own desires.
And if we make a few mistakes,
so what? That's just the breaks.
Learning is the goal to which we all aspire.

Guess there's just no place in this world for a man like me.
I just want to be myself, and fulfill my destiny,
but when I try to live my own life, I'm in conflict with society.
A man must do what a man must do, and stand up for what he believes.

Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again
Ohhh, ohhh... the flesh and blood again

by John Bradin
(45)
"FORBIDDEN LOVE"

I took your hand, but you turned away.  
Is there something else that you wanted to say?  
You love her, and she loves me;  
well, three can be such pleasant company.  
They say it's wrong, but you know it's alright.  
Let's stay together just for tonight.

Forbidden  
We're all just victims of our own desires  
Forbidden  
Everybody's trying to put out the fires  
Forbidden  
People are thinking that we're oh, so strange  
Forbidden  
Let's try something new for a change.

When I look into the depths of your soul  
I feel my senses spinning out of control.  
And when I feel the love that flows between you two,  
I have to re-evaluate my own point of view.  
They say it's wrong, but I know it's alright.  
Let's stay together just for tonight.

Forbidden  
We're all just victims of our own desires  
Forbidden  
Everybody's trying to put out the fires  
Forbidden  
People are thinking that we're oh, so strange  
Forbidden  
Let's try something new for a change.

by John Bradin

(45)
"FORBIDDEN LOVE"

Pleasure
I feel your soft caress
Pain
An exciting stimulus
Love
must be our destiny
Emotion
let your feelings set you free...

They say the truth will somehow free our minds
but ignorance is bliss, and justice is blind.
And the meek someday will inherit the earth;
they can have my share for what it's worth.

They say it's wrong, but we know it's alright
Let's stay together just for tonight

Forbidden
We're all just victims of our own desires
Forbidden
Everybody's trying to put out the fires
Forbidden
People are thinking that we're oh, so strange
Forbidden
Let's try something new for a change...

by John Bradin
"HANGIN' TREE"

I rode into this border town,
an outlaw on the desert wind.
I just broke out of the Tucson jail;
I'm thirsty, and in need of a friend.
So I came over to this cantina
just to drink and pass the time.
That's when I saw you, senorita;
have a shot of tequila, and a taste of lime.

Senorita, play your guitar.
I put my pesos on the bar.
Sing a sweet, sad song just for me
'cause tonight I might hang
from the hangin' tree...

Light the candle and open the window.
Let the lace curtains blow in the breeze.
We'll sit and talk of another place and time
when I was so young and so free.
I had time then just to love you,
but now I'm an outlaw on the run.
You see, for me, love has no future
because I'm living under the gun.

by John Bradin

(48)
“HANGIN’ TREE”

Senorita, play your guitar.

I put my pesos on the bar.

Sing a sweet, sad song just for me
‘cause tonight I might hang
from the hangin’ tree...

The full moon sails across the night
and I must mount my stallion and ride.

The sheriff and his posse are hot on my trail;
I must cross over to the other side.

Maybe someday we can be together;
maybe someday that will come to be,
but now I must ride on to freedom
or tonight I might hang from the hangin’ tree.

Senorita, play your guitar.

I put my pesos on the bar.

Sing a sweet, sad song just for me
‘cause tonight I might hang
from the hangin’ tree...

by John Bradin

(49)
RUNNIN' IN YOUR SLEEP

The red Cadillac pulled up at the corner,
out in front of the Pussycat Lounge.
Three men got out, and they had his number.
Spanish Petey was on the look out.
"Your time is up, boy; we've waited too long,
and you've dug this hole way too deep."

Crazy Tommy dove through the front window;
now he's runnin' in his sleep.

He's always lookin' over his shoulder;
with every minute, he gets a year older.

Now he's runnin' (runnin') runnin' in his sleep.

"Don't call me, baby, I'll call you!"

Big Mike slammed down the phone.

"Well, I've got spies on every corner,
but somehow, it seems that he is gone.
You can't skip out on a debt of honor,
it will haunt you all your life.

And one day, when you turn your back,
someone will get you with a switchblade knife."

by John Bradin

(50)
RUNNIN' IN YOUR SLEEP

You're always lookin' over your shoulder;
with every minute, you get a year older.
Now you're runnin' (runnin') runnin' in your sleep.

There's a dark side that exists
in the soul of every man.
You have to look inside the illusion
if you really want to understand.

Now he cruises Rush Street at night,
because it's all part of the game.
Nobody calls him Crazy Tommy anymore,
all his I.D. 's under a phony name.
He's not really scared, you understand,
or at least that's what he tells himself.
But one day he'll have to face his own fear,
just like a nightmare straight from Hell.

He's always lookin' over his shoulder;
with every minute, he gets a year older.
Now he's runnin' (runnin') runnin' in his sleep.

by John Bradin

(51)
"AMERICA CALLING"

America calling from beyond.

Someone is calling out my name.

I can feel your thoughts on my wavelength;
is this some kind of crazy game?

OOhhh... I've heard about ESP

and you're so special to me.

I know I'm special to you...

Can you hear me?

AMERICA CALLING

Right now, you're beyond the ocean

but time and distance don't bother us.

We send our thoughts out to each other;

our love is based on mutual trust.

OOhhh... I've heard about ESP

and you're so special to me.

I know I'm special to you...

Can you hear me?

AMERICA CALLING

by John Bradin

(52)
"BE FREE"

Drivin' through the city with my wheels of flame,
just sittin' the world on fire.
Doin' any thing that I can get my hands on,
just tryin' to get higher.
Well, I'm just lookin' out for the individual
because nobody cares.
And when it comes time for payin' the residuals
there's nothin' left to share.

Stand up...break loose...be free
wasted...naked, stoned and stabbed
tasted...the good and the bad
hustlin'...yes, I know the way
listen...to what I'm trying to say
Stand up...break loose...be free

There's a paper tiger comin', you know it's full of air
just for a scare.
The politicians went to their own funeral yesterday
not knowing what to wear.

by John Bradin
(53)
"BE FREE"

A lady laid dead flowers on the tired and humbled masses,
rolling stones upon the grave.
And when it comes time for covering their asses,
there's nothing left to save.

Stand up...break loose...be free

by John Bradin

(54)
"STANDING IN THE SHADOWS"

I was standin' in the shadows
when the full moon crossed my eyes.
Dreamin' of whiskey and lace;
misplaced by time and space.
I've forgotten the reason why...

Red star on the horizon
another lonely night begins
Love is just a conquest
a war that no one wins.

Whatever happened to the dreams we once had;
rainbow flights of fantasy?
Someone new came along; now all my dreams are gone...
but what must be, must be.

by John Bradin
(55)
"STANDING IN THE SHADOWS"

I was standing in the shadows
when your memory came floatin' by...
relived the Grand Illusion;
experienced love's narcotic confusion.
I've forgotten the reason why.

Red star on the horizon
another lonely night begins
Love is just a conquest
a war that no one win

by John Bradin

(56)
“WAITIN”

I smell the hot, wet wind comin’ across the wall.

Somewhere in the back of my brain, I hear the demon call,
sayin’, “Let me touch your body, baby; this ain’t no time to stall.
So don’t play the innocent angel with me, waitin’ for the fall…”

‘Waitin’…yes, it’s been a long time comin’

‘Waitin’…yes, you know it’s almost here

‘Waitin’…got this lonely, sinkin’ feelin’

‘Waitin’…feels as though the end…is near.

I don’t like this bullshit, so I take another pill.

Everybody says you can’t escape, but some day, baby, I will

‘cause I always take my best shot, and I always pay my bill

so roll on over, shut your face; lay down, and be still.

‘Waitin’…yes, it’s been a long time comin’

‘Waitin’…yes, you know it’s almost here

‘Waitin’…got this lonely, sinkin’ feelin’

‘Waitin’…feels as though the end…is near.

by John Bradin

(57)
"WAITIN'"

'Waitin'... don't ya know we been

'Waitin'... ooh, child, we been

'Waitin'... don't like this

'Waitin'...

I smell the hot, wet wind comin' across the wall.

Somewhere in the back of my brain, I hear the demon call

sayin', "Yes, you got a nice body, baby, but your things' a little small,

so don't play the innocent angel with me, waitin' for the fall..."

'Waitin'... yes, it's been a long time comin'

'Waitin'... yes, you know it's almost here

'Waitin'... got this lonely, waitin' feelin'

'Waitin'... feels as though the end... is near.

'Waitin'... don't ya know we been

'Waitin'... ooh, child, we been

'Waitin'... don't like this

'Waitin'...

by John Bradin
ABOVE: (from left to right) Sandy G., Kim, the author John Bradin, and Bryan.