THE INSIDE VIEW

JAILHOUSE POEMS

by

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A BOOK OF POEMS BASED ON OBSERVATIONS OF PEOPLE INCARCERATED IN, OR WORKING AT A SMALL CORRECTIONAL FACILITY IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND. I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THAT I WAS NEVER ABLE TO MAKE THESE OBSERVATIONS, BUT, SINCE THIS IS THE WAY THINGS TURNED OUT, I DECIDED TO SHARE SOME THOUGHTS AND INSIGHTS WITH YOU, THE READER. SOME OF THESE ARE HUMOROUS AND SOME ARE THOUGHT-PROVOKING, BUT I HOPE YOU ENJOY READING THEM AS MUCH AS I ENJOYED DREAMING THEM UP. HOPE AND HUMOR IS WHERE YOU FIND IT.
CORRECTION'S OFFICERS
(C.O.s)
Each one's an individual
much like you and me.
But there the likeness ends because,
you're simply Pod E-three
Even though they seem to be
they are not your friend.
They'll laugh with you and joke with you
and rules they'll slightly bend.
They don't want to get to know you,
because you can't hang out.
You've done things to get you here
"It's just a job to them!" you shout.
It is indeed a job to them
for which they will get paid,
to babysit, deliver food
and rules to be conveyed.
And when the rules get broken
and you refuse to hear their pleas.
There's ten of them and one of you
and they'll taze you to your knees.
You'll listen then, you can't refuse.
You had your final chance.
You came out full of gusto
in what was your final stance.
So even though we're human
and made one big mistake.
They simply cannot be your friend
there's still no need to hate.
You'll leave here before too long
to go to better places.
They'll be here to babysit
and scoff at newer faces.
They're not your friend, they don't mean to be
You're a temporary theme.
And when you've up and gone away
it's not of you they dream.
So look at them for what they are
not what you want them to be.
They're guards to watch your every move
not part of your family.
So even it you think you are,
a member of their band.
Screw up major just one time
and see the taser in their hand.
MY JAILHOUSE TAT
I got a jailhouse tattoo
I haven’t seen it yet.
He only just now finished
and the tattoo is still wet.
I went into his dim-lit cell
he sat upon his bed.
I sat upon his toilet seat,
his business seat he said.
We discussed my commissary,
his payment as it were.
I asked if he’d ever done one.
He said “definitely, to be sure.”
What would you like for your first
taxhouse tat?
You want something pretty cool.
Something hereditary?
You don’t want to look like a fool.
“Well my family is Canadian
and their symbol is pretty tight.
Maybe on my shoulder blade
and maybe about this height.”
So I said a Canadian beaver.
I think that would be okay.
I think my family will like it.
It’s Canadian all the way.
So he made a small concoction
with baby oil, soap and pee.
At least I think that’s what he said.
I think he was kidding me.
He found himself a staple.
“What will you do with that?”
“This is the latest technology
for a modern jailhouse tat.”
I thought that I might faint away,
there was a lot of blood.
He poked and dipped and continuously
jabbed
there was a torrential flood.
I couldn’t really see it.
I could only go by what he said.
He said that it was looking good,
but it would give me strange street cred.
I had told him that a beaver
would go with my family’s home.
It was three whole hours.

My mouth was starting to foam.
So now I get to see it.
I’m excited but I’m scared.
What if it came out stupid?
What if it had no hair?
Well that was the least of my worries.
It’s nearly as big as life.
and to think that I was worried,
that a tattoo could give me strife.
I told him just a beaver…
Canadian symbol near and dear.
He tattooed Justin Bieber
Who knew he couldn’t hear?
UNCOOKED
I’ve counted seven different kinds they feed us through the week.
Navy, red and undercooked the beans of which I speak.
They always go uneaten and returned upon the tray.
I guess they put them in the pot to wait another day.
The white ones often visit us primarily for lunch.
These, of course, return intact ‘coz beans, they shouldn’t crunch.
They hide them in a gravy sauce with cut up bits of meat.
An attempt to hide the uncooked beans, an underhanded feat.
The red ones served with hot dogs in my taste are the best.
They’re softer so it’s easy to rise above the rest.
The white ones I don’t understand, Pinto? or just white?
They have a tough and hardened shell but I know that’s not right.
Beans should be delightful. They’re, of course, the magical fruit.
They should be a welcome guest with a resultant, malodorous toot.
But here they simply take up space on an otherwise bland repast.
Eventually they’ll fade away or they’ll be here to the last.
So take the uncooked beans away, we will not ask for more.
Replace them with some garlic mashed, that will even up the score.
THE DREAM
It’s been so long, I see you know
Your hair is swaying sweetly.
You’re wearing that sweater I love you in
Your make-up’s on so neatly.
We’re in a golden meadow now, soft and light
the colors rich and pure.
Bright yellows, soft blues, greens and reds,
your hazel eyes for me allure.
I’m so glad you came today, I needed you a lot
it’s been so long since I’ve held you.
I was in a terrible spot,
I dreamt I was away from you
I couldn’t reach you then.
But here you are, you’re beautiful
I’ll never leave you again.
The breeze is light and airy,
as I softly stroke your cheek.
The birds are singing sweetly
they sound so mild and meek.
The sunlight on your hair and face
as you sit there on that log.
Reminds me of the brightest sun
that follows a dense gray fog.
I’m so in love with all you are
and your smile that makes me weak.
Your kiss, your touch, your warm embrace
they only things I seek.
Wait, where’d you go? You’ve run away.
Where are you now, my dear?
I know I’ll find you soon enough,
but are you far or near?
Oh I see you, you gorgeous thing
You’ve run down to the beach.
I’m on my way, I’ll be there soon
you won’t be out of reach.
The breeze is nice but it’s so hot
just laying in the sun.
I feel the burn on my own skin,
I think I’m overdone.

But laying here beside you now,
your tan skin next to mine.
Your warm soft body on the sand
is looking oh so fine.
The lapping of the waves on us
the sound puts me to sleep.
I feel myself just drifting off
and resting oh so deep.
The waves, the breeze, the birds in flight
the sounds are all so calm.
the sand, the sea, your golden hair
just sifting through my palm.
What sounds I hear? What harshness
that leaves my body shaken.
I smile, I frown, I open my eyes
and slowly I awaken.
White walls, white bed, it was only a dream?
and you’re not with me here?
I roll back over to face the wall
and wipe away a tear.
MY NEW FRIENDS
I’ve been a reader all of my life
in love with the written word.
But over the past ten months or so
my passion for reading has soared.
Cheever and Deaver, Shakespeare and
Dunne,
Irving, LeCarre and Rushdie,
Stewart and Follett and Herman Hesse
Larsson, Tan, Hyde and Dorsey.
Gusterson, Grifton, Hayden and Wouk
Wallace, Austen, Levin.
Give me some history from Stephen
Ambrose.
Kerouac gave me the wind.
Michener’s novels were heavenly reads.
Philbreck brought me the past.
Melville with Billy and Moby Dick,
Dostoyevskiy was so meant to last.
I’ve gotten involved with writers of
yore,
like Bronte and Hugo and Twain.
Dumas, Defoe and the great Wally Lamb
with Crichton to help ease the pain.
I learned about Hutterites, thanks Mary
Ann,
India Treasures was great.
Gorkiy Park took me to faraway lands.
The Hotel New Hampshire and Cider
House Rules
brought me an author quite awesome.
The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo and
her ways
made me sad that there’s no more Stieg
Larsson.
Before there was Sheepish with
Catherine and Friend,
Patience and Sarah were there.
Bonesetter’s Daughter and Kitchen
God’s Wife
and Amy brought Asian’s who care.
The Hunchback was different that
Disney of old,
the ending was uber traumatic.
Les Miserables with Cossette and Jean
the story was truly dramatic.

My Life As A Fake and Hammerhead
Ranch
I’d never heard of before.
Like Water For Chocolate and Hornet
Flight,
I’d include all in my store.
Not all I’ve read deserve number one
some were not worth my reading.
But She’s Come Undone and Dragon’s
Tattoo
lifted me when I was needing.
I’m reading more that ten books a
month,
A scale that I’ve not reached before.
As long as I can I’ll continue to read.
There’s always room for one more.
I’m keeping a list of the titles I’ve read
to know if I liked them or not.
I can usually tell by the excerpt on back
if I’m going to give them a shot.
The classics I’ve read most assuredly
were
deserving to be singled out.
But so many others I’m happy to say
delighted me beyond a doubt.
So while I have time and am getting my
fill,
I’ll continue to read all I can.
As Evanovich and Beesly and Harris and
Brown
keep finding a place in my hand.
THE ROOMMATE
He’s comatose, or nearly so
but I think that’s drug-induced.
He sleeps for sixteen hours a day
only up for meals and juice.
His teeth are gone, his gait is slow,
he’s bent just like a stick.
He looks and walks like he’s eighty-five,
but he’s only twenty-six.
I’m not sure what he’s doing here,
we haven’t got that far.
I’m not sure what he does out there,
but I’m sure it’s bar to bar.
If he were up, he’d be asking me
for coffee or a snack.
I don’t like giving things away
and coffee for him is crack.
He craves it often, he asks a lot
but I didn’t take him to raise.
My last one left when he went insane
I get a lot of strays.
They need to fix the entry form
on their revolving door.
I’d like to know ahead of time
if the next will ask for more.
It’s quiet now, he sleeps again,
and won’t be up for hours.
Until the medic brings his drugs
and I hide in the showers.
It’s terrible to live like this.
It’s worse to live like that.
It’s best to give and not receive.
When do I get it back?
THE COFFEE MAN
Everyone loves the coffee man;
his coffee is like gold.
It can get him almost anything.
If he wants it, mark it sold.
Watches, shoes, a radio
with headset if you please.
A big shot here, a small shot there,
it’s gone just like a breeze.
It works not just for getting stuff
but draws in friends like flies.
Most are temporary,
like clouds across the skies.
They come by to ask about
random and sundry things.
Looking for a shot or two
They’ll listen while he sings.
They’ll listen to his nonsense.
They’ll let him ramble on.
Once the coffee goes away
he knows that they’ll be gone.
Now he knows that they don’t care
‘bout what he has to say.
They’re using him to get a fix
to make it through the day.
They’re using him, he knows it’s true
but that isn’t a crime.
‘Coz talking and not thinking
makes it easier to do his time.
INNOCENCE
My court date is coming and I might get out of here. It cannot be much longer now and I'll be free and clear. It must be soon, it can't be long and I'll be getting out.
I've been here for two months now. "That's long enough!" I shout. When they came and picked me up, I told them everything. They can't hold that against me now since I was coming clean. They asked me lots of questions about things I might have done. I sat right there and talked to them I didn't even run. I've signed all kinds of papers now they called it an indictment. But I don't know what all that meant, should there be some more excitement? So now I'm thinking with my case they're all going to meet, to figure out just how to get me back out on the street. If I can go and see the judge and let him know I'm sorry, I'll leave this place and not come back so he won't have to worry. There's lots of reasons I can say to tell him what I did. I'm sure he'll understand it all because I'm just a kid. I haven't seen a lawyer yet but they'll be on my side. So with their help and their support this thing with me will slide. But on one's come to see me so I'm not sure what to think. If I have to stay much more then that is gonna stink. I feel bad for all these guys who have to stay a while. "Coz I'll be out of here real soon and live it up in style. so I'll be thinking of these guys when I get out of here. "Coz nothings gonna stick to me I have nothing to fear. So like I said I'll be out soon and I'll be on my way. "Coz honesty's the best policy that's what I always say.
THE ANGRY MAN
He's the angriest man I've ever known
But only to her it seems
He laughs and jokes with all of us
But to her, on the phone, he screams
"It's your fault that I'm in here bitch!"
He's holding nothing back
"If not for you I'd be at work!"
He's relentless in his attack
"You stupid slut, you're good for naught
I'm cleaning it up a lot
"You're an absolutely worthless twit
coz of you my life is shot.
If not for you, I'd be at work
scooping up some crab.
But you and nine assaults you caused
I can't believe, you scab!
I've been in trouble for so long
because of you, you know
If you would stop harassing me
and causing me to blow
You're worthless and can only work
if I give you things to do
You're doing nothing to help yourself
but no one else wants you
Maybe if you went and tried
to prostitute your bod
someone, somewhere, somehow might
just give you a nod
Now get my tools and get my boat
you worthless piece of crap!
And try to clean up this mess you made
I'm looking like a sap
Call my lawyer, call the press
do something to help me here
If not for you I'd be at home
drinking another beer
I'll kick your ass when I get home
if you don't help me out this time
You're the only problem here
And now you've made it mine
I can't stand the thought of you
just holding on the line
so I'll call you back in a little while
if I can find the time
Go do something useful now

you ungrateful little whore
I love you and I'll call you back
so we can talk some more."
TRUE LOVE
It's only when they're fighting hard
that she will turn him in.
When they're bloodied, black and blue,
a fight she cannot win.
He hates her every time she does
and he just calls her mean.
But this is life support for her
and he just won't stay clean.
He calls her names, she punches him,
he hits her in the head.
They never think that this goes on
'til one of them is dead.
Those of us who hear of this
might think it very strange.
But til they get the help they need
nothing will ever change.
He'll keep on abusing her
and she abusing him.
And still the battle rages on.
No one will ever win.
They're stuck with one another 'coz
their habits are too bad.
They'll keep going just like this
and that is rather sad.
But somehow they still call this love
with bruises, blood and beer.
And they'll keep fighting back and forth
and he'll be back in here.
FANTASY
I think the C.O. likes me
She smiled at me and said
"Are you okay?" I smiled back
and it went to my head.
She kind of touched my hand a bit
She was giving me my mail.
Her finger lingered on mine a tad
and made my feelings sail.
She looked at me right in the eyes
almost as if to say
If you weren't here, but with me there
I think there'd be a way.
I'd have my way with you my dear
or you'd have your way with me.
We’d take turns caressing us
if we weren’t here, you’d see.
I could feel her kiss my neck
‘coz I’m into that you know.
But wait, a nice hot shower first
to soften up the glow.
Do you want to shower all alone
or should I go with you?
you want me there to soap your skin?
I think I’d love that too.
I’d brush her hair one hundred strokes
if I could wait that long.
I’d put my arm around her waist
and hum a little song.
My love for her would know no bounds
her love for me would soar.
I’d make her feel so special,
a kiss would start the tour.
you’ll do everything I ask?
then please get on your knees
I’ll go down instead of you
it’s you I want to please.
I’d massage her front, I’d massage her
back
interrupting with a kiss.
I’d make her feel she’s in a dream
if I could have this wish.
we’d hold each other half the night
the other half we’d play.
it’s only for this long caress
its just for that I pray.
MY MATTRESS
It's three inches thick.
It's hard as a brick.
This mattress that I must sleep on
I don't mean to complain
but it causes a strain
on a back that no longer is strong.
It's harder by far
than a table or bar.
Laying on this is just so wrong.
I can only be more sore
if I slept on the floor.
How much longer does this have to go
on?
It might not be bad
if three more of them I had,
but I still wouldn't be singing a song.
"Course I'd rather have one
than be left with none.
I just wish that I could be gone.
But if they hear my voice
a pillowsoft is my choice
and from this mattress I will be long
gone.
So I'll give it a rest
and hope for the best
for this mattress that I must sleep on.
THE EXPERIENCE
I can't believe the people in here could actually make it outside.
They don't seem to have much going for them,
but here in these walls they thrive.
They aren't able to add, subtract or divide.
You know that they can't really read.
But give them a sentence of any amount
they'll know what you'll really see.
So many years at D-O-C
equates to so many served.
Minus the good time, and all the code reds,
a quarter of time will be yours.
But how do these people make it outside?
How did they really get by?
With government handouts, shelters and meals,
and stealing to pay for their high.
I listen with interest when they talk about
what shelters would give them a rest.
The lines that they stood in to get free cheese,
the coffee that was the best.
Living in dumpsters, living in tents,
crashing wherever they can.
Some of the people currently here consider this part of their plan.
Three hots and a cot, a shower and warmth,
beat spending the winter outside...
where winds and rain and biting cold
makes you wish you were back inside.
Getting back in is easy to do
for drugs or trespass or theft.
Grab a girl's butt and a sex offense
will get you five years or less.
So once they come back, they can live
like kings
and take other inmate's stuff.
Applying your street smarts to those not as strong
or an arm twist might just be enough.

But those of us who really had lives
with houses and families,
careers and cars and bank accounts
all stripped from us like we were thieves.
This has been an experience
and certainly not that great.
I could have lived without all this,
I could live without the hate.
Everything's done for a reason they say
but I've kind of lost my faith.
I don't know what's down the road
but I don't have long to wait.
Some see this as a temporary home
others as very traumatic.
If I could leave now, I'd never come back
the right path would be automatic.
But that is the difference between they
that live
like this for most of their life,
and we who have made a simple mistake
and see this as more than strife.
I've reached the point of diminishing returns
more time in here does me no good.
I've learned the system, I know how to live,
I've learned to survive in the hood.
And when I get out I'll never look back
no matter what they say.
This will be just a bad memory
as I quickly drive away.
INSANITY
I watched a man go crazy.
His mind began to rot.
I thought that he’d been faking.
I’m still not sure he’s not.
He started out quite normal,
much like you and I.
A little slow, and slurred in speech,
but a regular kind of guy.
He started having problems
thinking of what he’d done.
His conscience got him quicker
than if he’d had a gun.
His bowels shut down completely.
Couldn’t poop, then couldn’t pee.
Started telling numbers
to people he couldn’t see.
He had a couple seizures.
The first he’d ever had.
His son had been afflicted.
Apparently they were bad.
I asked if he were faking,
if he thought they’d send him home.
He answered yes but I wonder now
if his mind began to roam.
He was no longer normal.
But then who really is?
His mind was lost while searching
for a reason for what he did.
JEOPARDY
"Tell me for a hundred points
how to boost your self esteem."
Contestants scratched their heads and
looked
as if they were in a dream.
"We went over this for three whole
weeks
I know you can tell me how.
Self esteem, you know this one.
We'll try something else for now.
How about reducing stress
for one hundred and fifty points?"
"We're not sure just what you mean.
Do you mean like in your joints?"
"No! I know you know this stuff.
It's supposed to be a test.
It's masked behind the Jeopardy game,
you're really not trying your best."
"Use your "I" words teacher.
Describe your feelings" they say.
"You guys are driving me crazy!
I don't mean to feel this way."
"Have you examined your emotions?
Have you lost your self respect?"
"No, class, I don't think so.
Oh no, I'm lost as heck.
I thought that I was teaching.
I thought I knew my stuff.
This game is failing miserably.
Was my teaching not enough?"
"No, teach, we were kidding.
We know all the answers" they said.
"We learned enough from what you
taught
to mess around with your head.
You taught us how to handle
emotions, stress and fear.
You taught us how to use "I" words
like I wish I wasn't here.
But most of all you taught us
that one day of the week.
We look forward to a respite
from the stresses and can speak
About what might be troubling
and keeping us in pain.

We meet with you and learn some things
without a lot of strain.
So whether we display it
or keep it deep within,
just know that at life's jeopardy
you've given us a chance to win."
LOOKING GOOD
My hair looks like crap and my beard is a mess
and my eyebrows are growing like crazy.
My lower back hurts ‘coz it has no support
and the lights make my vision quite hazy.
It’s cruel and unusual punishment I think
to be left with no tweezers or file.
But a few rotten apples have ruined it for all.
They’d shank you as quick as they’d smile.
For one of those portable nail trimming sets
for Christmas that I gave away,
I’d give up the third blanket I’m not s’posed to have
and even give part of my tray.
Some of us used to take care of ourselves
with mani’s and pedi’s and more.
Can’t find you hair gel or emery board
then quick we’ll just run to the store.
But here there’s no limit to what you can’t have
and you surely can’t make yourself pretty.
So beg for the trimmers and clippers and hope
that no one will think you so petty.
But looking presentable’s more than just vain,
it makes you feel more like a person.
You’re stashed away in a crappy old place
that you really are hoping won’t worsen.
So do what you can and clean up your act
and trim up those unruly ends.
Go pluck your eyebrow’s with what nails you have
and put your looks on the mend.

You’ll feel much better and won’t look so bad
and people might follow your lead.
You can head up a better class of folk
in preps for when you are freed.
STINKY KID
We got a new arrival.
We call him stinky kid.
He won’t get in the shower
like all the others did.
I don’t know why he won’t go.
We clean it every day.
It shines like sterling silver
or like the sun across the bay.
It’s really not that scary.
The water flows like rain.
We have a custom showerhead
and a swiftly moving drain.
The water feels refreshing
in 90 second bursts.
It might really scare him.
For him it even hurts.
The one time he got in there
I think I heard him scream.
Could it be he fell asleep
and yelled within a dream?
Perhaps it really burned him
like the Wicked Witch of the West.
Maybe he’d get in there
with floaties or life vest.
He’ll have to get a shower soon;
we have to get a tool.
I think a group of us are going
to wire brush this fool.
We’ll make him love the showers.
He’ll stink no more we’re sure.
A beat down with a wire brush
can be a long term cure.
WHAT YOU SEE
What you see is what you see
not me, not who I am.
you see me as a criminal
caught up in a jam.
You look at me, I know you think
I've always been this way.
But I was once respected, loved
and made an honest way.
I worked and raised a family
I have walked with grace.
I may have made just one mistake
to put me in this place.
But that's not what you're looking at
that's not what you see.
I'm getting just what I deserve
you'd throw away the key.
I was your mechanic, cook,
your teacher or your friend.
But what you see is what you see,
our friendship's at an end.
And you don't know my guilt or not
you don't want to know.
You feel uneasy seeing me,
you can't wait to go.
Don't catch my eye or then you'll feel
there's something you should say.
But you'll be walking out of here
and me, I have to stay.
I'm the only one that knows
exactly what I did.
It's not like what the paper said,
but you don't care a bit.
You just want me put away
for what you think you know.
So leave before you say something.
I just want you to go.
'Coz what you see is what you see
not what I am or was.
You'd like to see me go away
that's whata the system does.
We've parted now and I can go
back to my lonely thoughts.
You can leave and be assured
that one bad one was caught.
THETOOTH FAIRY LOVES ST MARY’S
The tooth fairy must live in a mansion by now
because of St Mary’s County.
She gets paid by the tooth that falls out of their heads.
The coinage is simply her bounty.
She’s driving a Maybach and living in style,
she’s heating it up in her sauna.
Her lawns are all manicured pretty and prim,
with exotic flora and fauna.
She’s kicking it back while she lays in the sun
beside her Olympic-sized pool.
She heats it up then in her hot tub for ten.
The Jacuzzi with TV is cool.
So how did she make it? What made her so rich?
How did she manage this scam?
With sweets for the kids, and cold sodas for all
she suckered them in with her plan.
She cornered the market on fluoride you see
and sold it to someone in India.
Where they’re starving and living their lives on the street,
but their smiles are large when they grin at ya.
They have toothy grins that go ear to ear
no need for the tooth fairy there.
From two years to 90 they keep all their teeth
with minimal social health care.
She gave up on most of the other poor lands
that we would call those third world places
to focus attention on this county rich
with teeth that fall out of faces.
She’s biding here time and enjoying herself
to wait for those great pearly whites.
And here she reposes and sips on a drink
and dreams of those vast toothfree sights.
She’ll keep living large and live high on the hog
in these toothless and backwoodsy lands,
where not even the poor in the rest of the world
can rival these enamel-free spans.
So keep doing what you’re doing St Mary’s ya’ll,
and strengthen your citizen’s gums.
‘Coz their teeth are all fading and going away
and leaving these oral hygiene slums.
MEDS
You don't see them for hours.
They stay inside their beds
until that glorious hour
when someone hollers "Meds!"
Medicines to calm them
so they don't get too upset.
Medicines to minimize
that overwhelming stress.
The medic checks the 'puter
to see what they should get.
"Can you raise my intake?
"Coz I don't think I'm set."
I know that what they're getting
is helping every day.
They're feeling so much better.
This will help their stay.
It's making them sleep better.
Awake is what they hate.
They're only getting sixteen hours.
Can they knock out the other eight?
I know that you have something
like a Rip Van Winkle pill.
Something that will put me out
all twenty-four hours still.
I have no need for eating
if sleeping I can get.
Twenty-four hours, seven days a week
my sentence will be set.
I can sleep my time away,
I won't have to know.
My sentence will be over;
my time will come and go.
Someone's kicking at their door,
they've gotten off their meds.
Someone's throwing dinner trays
Time to lock them in their beds.
But is that the answer?
Lock them in all day.
Take away their medicine
and now you have to pay.
So think of what you're doing;
Zombie nation on the rise
better that than heathens
uncontrollable with their cries.

Just keep giving them something that
will calm their wounded mind
'til they get out and off their meds.
Mystery Meat

The only time that we agree
is when it's time to eat.
That's when we get together and play
Guess the mystery meat.

In the Navy when we saw it,
we called it S.O.S.
When we got it here upon the tray,
It anybody's guess.
The color's unlike anything
You've actually seen before.
An oddly mix of brownish green
The color of bacterial spore.
or it can be unnaturally dull
And covered up with gravy.

But nothing like you've ever seen.
Not what they serve the Navy.
So that's just what it looks like now
On your tray to the naked eye.
But what is it really looking at?
Was it an animal? Was it alive?

Some said that it may have come
From the milk of a big ol' cow.
It makes nice sad to think about.

A tongueless bovine now,
We get it in two different ways.
The first looks like roast beef
A slab upon the tray that shouldn't
Cause you any grief.
But tasting it just don't know
What you would call this stuff.
It's not like some thing natural
And greatly offends taste buds.

The other form we get, it is
Like Guernsey chipped beef on toast.
But there's no cream or beef or taste
Just crumbly lumps at most.
I wonder if this all could be
Some form of soybean swill
And pressed to form a slab or ground
To make a ghastly meal.

I wonder if they think that we
Can no longer taste.
I know the guards aren't eating this
For good food they're making haste.
So now we're back to where we were
Trying to guess the source.
Of where this mystery meat might come.
We still don't know; of course.
It's still a great big guessing game
That stumps us to no end.

I guess we'll keep on eating it
Since money they won't spend.
To feed us food that we might know
Or actually eat at home.

Bleat tongue, ox tail, pig's feet ground up
Will continue to make us o'pian.

David Dobbs
HE’S SENSITIVE

He’s the most sensitive guy that I’ve ever met, well really I don’t know how much. I know that he has a feminine side and with that one he’s really in touch. He’s really polite, he never offends, and his eyes tear up when he smiles. His hair he can do in only eight hours and if he doesn’t, well, then it gets wild. Now he can shoot hoops like John Havlicek, his half court impressive to see. But beat him in horse a number of times and at rec he refuses to be. He showers a lot, maybe four times a day. I guess to make him smell sweet. The sensitive side gets the best of him then. He even plucks the hair off his sheet. He may have lost girlfriends, some tougher than he, they might have thought he was sick. But he was just showing his feminine side, and they didn’t want to date a chick. I think out of here he goes many lengths to make his appearance quite snappy. But here in this hole if something comes up it can make him feel quite unhappy. Now there’s nothing wrong with a sensitive side if you have a counter to boot. A manly side to make up the diff, the one that don’t give a hoot. But something there may be lacking when it comes to manning it up. The feminine side is the dominant one, he drank heavy from the hormonal cup. Now I hope that he recognizes that this is simply a bust on him. But I know he cries when I beat him at horse whenever we rec in the gym.

He is a great guy for a sensitive soul and I think that he’ll be okay. But a subscription to Cosmo might not be bad in case he turns out to be gay.
EVACUATION PLAN
If the building catches fire
where do I have to go?
I’ve checked the chart a dozen times,
but really can’t be so.
I leave the safety of my room
and march on down the hall.
But am I going outside,
where it might be fall?
Where the spring or summer air
can whip away the flame?
Where cold and blustery winter days
can redirect their aim?
Oh no, I’m not so lucky.
I’m gonna be a refried bean.
The walled-in outdoor B-ball court
that’s covered with a screen.
That will be where I am held,
my final resting place.
With fire raging ’round me,
I’ll sing Amazing Grace.
The walled-in outdoor B-ball court
is surrounded by jail walls.
Four of them in all, that is
but we’ll have basketballs.
If the jail’s on fire
I’m guessing it will burn
all the walls that exist now;
the court it won’t discern?
So we can stand inside the court
and dribble til we sweat.
Will the C.O.’s be with us?
They’re getting out, I bet.
So if a fire starts somewhere
I’m headed for the showers.
I’m betting I can last in there
at least for several hours.
I’d rather take my chances there
where I can’t see the burn.
Than stand where I’m surrounded
by those flames and wait my turn.
We haven’t had a fire yet.
I read that in a book.
So now’s a real good time for them
to take another look.
How wise is it for them to send
us all out to our doom?
You might as well just let us be
and leave us in our room.
So look at our escape plan
and avoid making it risky.
Just lead us outside safe and sound
or we’ll be burned and crispy.
ODE TO A TOILET SEAT
WHAT CAN YOU SAY ABOUT SOMETHING
AS MUNDANE AS A TOILET SEAT?
IT'S THERE TO SERVE A PURPOSE
AND THAT PURPOSE CAN'T BE BEAT.
IT'S THERE FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE
TO CUSHION YOU WHEN YOU SIT
UPON YOUR PORCELAIN THRONE
TO COMFORT YOU 'TIL YOU QUIT.
WHEN JOHN CRAPPER MADE IT
THE FLUSHABLE SEAT, HE SAID
THAT EVERYONE NEEDED COMFORT
SMALL RELIEF FROM A LIFE OF PAIN.
NOW I'VE BEEN THROUGHOUT ASIA
TO SEE SIGHTS BEYOND RELIEF
BUT ONE OF MY MOST FAVORED THINGS
BROUGHT GREAT PLEASURE AND RELIEF.
THE ASIANS CERTAINLY MAKE IT
LIKE MOST EVERYTHING,
BUT THEIR SIMPLE TOILET SEAT
WAS MADE FOR QUEENS AND KINGS.
FIRST OF ALL, IT'S HEATED
SO YOUR TUSHY WON'T GET COLD.
AND YOU CAN CHANGE THE SETTING
FRON WARM TO NEARLY SCald.
IT ALSO HAS A FEATURE
I HIGHLY RECOMMEND.
I CALL IT A BUTT SHOWER.
A BIDET FOR LADY FRIENDS.
BUT THIS IS SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT
A MESSAGE WITH GENTLE SPRAY
AND YOU CAN BEAT THAT FEELING.
IT WILL MAKE YOU WANT TO STAY.
DID I MENTION YOU CAN CHANGE
THE WATER TEMP AS WELL?
A SOFT AND WARM MASSAGING SPRAY
AND YOU WILL NEVER GET
OH YES MY BOY AND I HAVE MET
OUR MATCH WHEN IT COMES TO NICE.
I'VE SPENT MANY WAKING HOURS
AND EVEN PASSED OUT ON THERE TWICE.
I EVEN PUT ONE IN MY HOME
AT THE COST OF A SMALL USED CAR
SO WHY DO I BRING THIS UP WHEN
I CAN ONLY ENJOY IT FROM AFAR?
WITH ALL THESE COMFORTS OUT THERE
AND THE LIFE MY BUTT HAS KNOWN.
WHAT IS IT NOW EXPOSED TO?
WHAT CAN I CALL MY THRONE?
A COLD AND HEARTLESS HUNK OF STEEL
IT NUMBS THE RECTAL NERVE.
A REMINDER THAT OUR BUTTS ARE GETTING
A COLD BLAST NICE DESERVE
WHAT COULD BE LESS HUMAN?
WHO DEvised SUCH A PLOT?
WHO WOULD DARE OFFEND
JOHN CRAPPER WHO CARED A LOT?

THIS ISN'T WHAT HE INTENDED
WHEN HE GAVE AWAY HIS NAME.
WHEN IT WENT FROM UGLY CATHouse
WHEN THE CRAPPER IT BECAME
WHAT HEARTLESS ENGINEER AT SLOAN
CAME UP WITH THIS IDEAL?
THAT WE CAN MAKE A SINK AND ALL
IN UNCOMFORTABLE STAINLESS STEEL?
I WISH THAT HE COULD BE HERE
WHEN YOU CAN NEARLY SEE YOUR BREATH
AND MAKE HIM SIT UPON THIS JOHN
THIS HUNK OF FREEZING DEATH
THEN I'D KNOW HE UNDERSTANDS
I KNOW NOW THAT HE SEES
WE REALLY HAVE TO HEAT THIS THING
TO AT LEAST 98 DEGREES
AND NOW I REFUSE TO USE IT.
IT'S MY SILENT PROTEST YOU KNOW.
ALREADY IT'S BEEN FOUR DAYS NOW.
BUT MAN, I HAVE TO GO.
IF I COULD FIND A WAY TO USE
SOME MAGAZINES OR SHEETS
I'D CUSHION UP MY HARD, COLD STEEL
AND LET MY BUTTOCKS REST IN PEACE.

DAVID DOBBS
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ALONE

What do you do when the two that you love finally gave up on you?

They no longer think about you 'coz of course they have their own lives, that is true.

You were there once, a big part of their lives oh, for so many years.

But you've been gone now, it's been long enough and they're through spilling all of their tears.

They cried over you for many a day.

They did everything that they ought.

But now you're just an occasional call.

And you're a sometimes thought.

You did something wrong, admittedly so.

You thought getting things off your chest would make it better for all those involved.

But silence would have been best.

It's too late to consider the if's in your life.

If you had done this or done that.

You've lost the ones most important to you

And you wonder if you'll get those loves back.

It isn't their fault, you were a big part of their lives and you left it a mess.

The embarrassment, sorrow and hurt that you caused.

Well maybe then this is the best.

Religion will tell you that good things will come to those who are willing to wait.

That this is all part of a greater master plan.

That something good could come of your fate.

It's hard to accept that that might be true.

A positive that could come of this.

You've lost the ones most important to you.

The good parts of your life that you miss.

So is this the payback for things that you've done.

Predestined or fate from the start?

Could you have changed the whole outcome at all?

Could you have changed any part?

I can't believe that my life was meant to be absent from those that I love.

That I can go on for the rest of my life praying in vain to above.

It's hard to believe that on top of the world was where you would once stand.

To have it all go away, blown apart like the wind.

Whips away the dry desert sand.

I wish that I knew what the outcome would be.

I wish I knew how this all ends.

I wish I was strong like I used to be.

I wish that I could make amends.

But the ones that I love have deserted me now and I really can't blame them a bit.

It isn't their fault that I went away.

But I don't think I'm ready to quit.

I'll never forget you as long as I live.

I'll always remember my dears.

I'll keep writing sonnets while I have the strength and keep fighting back my own tears.

David Dobbs