

All of a Doodah
by John Everett

Sabotage Press

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I. Greasing the skids

The roast

the roast
slipped through our fingers
the roast
a fat dead pig
eluding our pudgy digits
and bouncing around the floor
that cold november dawn
i knew it was a mistake
i told them not to do it
our freckled digits
clumsy with grease
slimed in groovy gravy
grasping at the roast
graceful elusive cylinder of meat
bouncing around the floor
the roast
slipping through that forest of fingers
like muddy marbles
a slippery hippo
cooked to a fare-thee-well
on the dark floor
bouncingly elusive
the roast
warm dead pig
slipping through
our greedy grasp
into the shadows
can't see
meat
for the shadows
Mary Anne
took her knickers off

On the Bus

Surely I was a dummy
not to have brought a book
for the mind is a terrible thing—
a scurvy craven bitch
mauling the hinges
and worrying the fretwork...
contemptible cur!
riddled with mange
and packed in putrid pudding...
Fever bubbles break
like surf on my rocky brow,
acquisitive women
grasp at my straw,
dog me around
and throw me down-
gnawed to the knuckle,
gnawed to the marrow...
I nod to my neighbor
and as I depart
I flip him the bird

Pants

I put my pants on
I stand up
 in the withering monsoon
I speak to God without sound
 and yet
I am a victim
 of the tyranny of the bowels
 as I await the next purge
and she haunts my pants like a cigarette

somewhere it is lunchtime
somewhere larks are flirting with the breeze
somewhere butterflies are singing
 of mustard and gingham
 but not here
here it is dinnertime

she put the shine in my moon
she put the fear of God in me
she made me put my pants back on
she gave me eyes to see
 now she is in my pants
 and God is in me

Git

there was a lichen
 forming on my lip
and my clothes felt like bandages
when i opened the blinds
 and forked those beans down my throat
the vodka tasted just as good
 and i was starting to smell like a goat
fuck the world
i wanna get off
i got the runs
and a hacking cough
i'm happy with less
and less ain't shit
but it'll just have to do
cuz it's all i can git

Rhonda

she's a mezzo-soprano
if ever i saw one
she's got me whistlin' dixie
and fumblin' with her zippers
stayin' up late imbibin' tequila
i'd come to her with bells on
if she'd only give me a ring
don't hold back when it comes
to throwing your life away
on a guy with a mind like a strainer
pasta is all i retain

Washed up

love becomes passe —
too filled up
 with drink and rainwater
 tepid and brackish
too filled up to fuck
too empty to care
how square is the peg?
how big is the hole?
 — i'll tell you —
it's really really big
 and i don't know what's down there
and i'm not sticking around to find out
booze is okay
i don't work at the pentagon
aircraft-heavy machinery-food-
never touch the stuff
i put all my love in the wrong slot
 it ended up in china
never been there
but i like the food
i hear wednesday
 is eight-treasure chicken day
the men go out to sea
and the women weep
and the dogs eat the homework
and i missed the bus to new york
 but it's raining
 and you don't love me

Rainy sewer blues

Gallons of piss spilled down from the sky
there were corpses in the gutter
my galoshes were brimming with fishes
i couldn't keep a cigarette lit
the freeways were backed up with sewage
i felt like a lost dog dead in the amazon
and the lichens formed on my lips

time had run out
and time had no ending
it wasn't the scurvy
it wasn't the emphysema
it was the rainy sewer blues

god closed up shop
and the devil was in muldowney's
i was out on the sausage links
eating doughnuts and looking for a hole in one
there was a clamminess down in my crotch

but it wasn't the pleurisy
and it wasn't the shingles
it was the rainy sewer blues

Mustard

life is reckoned
in relation to death
as i devour heaven and hell
and falling down's
more fun than getting up

cars are bunched up
on the freeways
like hackles on american necks
and circus peanuts
spill from steamed-open envelopes

my heart is a bottle
full of the ketchup of love
but my veins
run yellow with mustard

I saw you

I saw you
saunter down that stair
smelling like a sandwich
tuning my organ
and burning my soul
in the sun of your smile.

The blood of the lamb
rained down around.

My toes curled back-
a row of red shrimp
in the salad of your smile
and your smile
is the whipped cream on my sundae
and Sunday
is the Lord's day.

Drowned sorrows

drown your sorrows in fuck
there is no give without take
did anyone get the number of that truck?
jump in the sack or jump in the lake

i won't lose any sleep
sleep of the just
sleep of the deep
i have no faith in trust

punch you with my lips
or kiss you with my fist
my heart is in eclipse
but i'm not mad; i'm pissed

Air

This is a poem about the air
and how there's nothing there
and when i walk down your street
i feel my bones disappear
I'm so fucked up
with blind ignorant love
i can feel it in my hair
I want to ride down your highway
but i don't know what to wear
My mind is melting down
and my heart is in my ears
Let me take you in my arms
I will buy you sixteen beers
I have loved the way you wear your hair
for sixty
million
years

Connie chung

i garble your name
like a foreign tongue

frailties, foibles
left unsung

if you are the barrel
i am the bung

tho i stand at the gibbet
i am not well-hung

my heart is a banjo
that is coming unstrung

i need you to breathe
you're an iron lung

i sully your altar
my shoes caked with dung

my life is a ladder
missing a rung

love is a hornet
and i have been stung

Another lonely shabbat

Another lonely shabbat
in the crypt of the quizzical heart.
'Death' is written in candy corns
on the mutilated altar
and the banshees crouch in the eaves
playing spin-the-bottle,
their eyes like tadpoles
in the cuspidor of night.
I feel diseased
and as a consequence petulant.
My mind distrusts my body
and my spleen won't be seen with my pancreas.
This fortnight past
has been an unbroken reverie
of gutquake and malignant gastric outcry.
Naught but grunion, scrapple and clabber
are to be had in this squalid bog
and the natives have begun to eye
my bloated festering carcass
with something approaching wanton lust.
The flatware is conspicuously absent
from the cupboard
and lines are forming on the mezzanine.

That there girl

I daubed my face with talcum powder
She greeted me with some welcome chowder
I saw that the lord had well-endowed her
and now late at night I can't help but shout her
name.

The whiskey maiden

Ah...the whiskey maiden...
more lovely than the dawn
with her pagan hips
and her shimmering monkey bones
she speaks to me
only with her tuba
and she takes me spelunking
on the lobster planet
we dance forgotten mambos
in the brothels of the moon
and we battle the zombies
with machine guns
the elves gave us
and there
amidst the carnage
she shucks the overalls
from my trembling body
and licks me clean
clean as a daisy
on sunday
and that is why i love
the whiskey maiden



II. Vote your shoe size

Fear and pain

i put in my time
scrounging pennies for mad dog
trying to put a name to this nothing
 sweating profusely
 profoundly
nothing counts for anything
the brain boils away to nothing
 and the brain pan goes to pot
 and i'm still in love
 with all the wrong folks
i can't warm up to people
 so i have to leave
i could make a career out of leaving
 leaving to stay healthy
 stay alive
 stay away
i live in fear and pain
the way some people live in pittsburgh:
 it's where i grew up
i want to be trippy and groovy
but i'm too much of an asshole
 and i never have acid when i need it
i walk through the desert
 with an erection
 and the mirages
 recede in the distance...
did i forget my lunch
or did i lose it?

Gutstream

the magisterial confabulation adjourned;
my snakelike puss
ensorceled a flagon of brandy —
a mere snoutful —
it wafted down the symphonic gullet
like an obsequious merlot
and crouched in my gutstream —
a treacherous trout,
perfidious pickerel,
a carpetbagging carp
befuddling my bowels.
good god almighty jesus.

Lack thereof

my brain
is a flatulent insomniac bitch
sucking up java and gruel
and worrying about the corpses
in the basement
all night long
and she won't shut up
and i'd like
to cave her fucking skull in

...if i could lick you all over
i'd be well

Glue

creosote reek
rattles my portal
 kneecaps
 knuckles
my life a brimming bowl
 I vomit gently
 in the soft twilight

Shrapnel

i lost my sense of zen
around the time the beer ran out
no-one was left
but the usual hangers-on
but more importantly
you were gone
i was too numb to react
there was pain of some kind
i had to piss very badly
i wanted you to be in my movie
the one about the drunk fuckup
and the women he drags down with him
into the whirlpool of vomit
you would play
the one he really loved
the one who gave up
and walked away
i would never have missed you if you stayed

there is rock
and there is roll
and there is also the reality of bad sex
or no sex at all
and sometimes when i turn around
everyone is gone
and nobody told me where the party is

all you beautiful interesting girls
please recognize me
take me like shrapnel into your heart
we will dress like gangsters
and play footsie in the dark

I am not your mother

i was two apples shy of a bushel
and nearing the thirteenth floor
when some bastard
punched the daylights
out of the nighttime.
people were taking their clothes off.
"i'm not your mother!" i hollered,
my voice a brittle network of spittle,
"i can't love you!
i'm through washing your fuckin' jammies
and you can pack your own damn lunch!"
the moon went down
in a sea of fists
and the lemmings kept on coming.
a fragile music played.
mucus formed on the ceiling
and i softly pulled the door
shut.

Swindle

i will swindle you of your suicide
 and dun you of your demise
i will steal from you death itself
i will cajole and entice and inveigle
 you will hand over the gun
i will talk you down off that ledge
 and i will wheedle the razor
 from your twitchy digits
i will divulge to you the beauty
 of life's subtle grandeur-
 the long and langourous love-in-
 the java-juice joyride
yours for the asking
 a bill of goods
 a parcel of underwater acreage
and when you are back among us
 with your idiot grin
i will turn the gun on myself
 and hurl myself from the ledge
and i will leave this life as i found it
 a lie
 and a cheat
 and a fraud

Siege

i suspect that my life is secretly over
though i don't have all the facts
i wait at home on the weekend
for news from the front
but it's strictly on a need to know basis

i maintain the siege
i live on beans and cabbage
i patch the battlements
and parge the bulwarks
and i sleep in my clothes
ready to spring into action

when i can muster the energy
i work on a portrait of the artist
sawing his own head off

Friday night

it's friday night
i haven't got paid
i haven't got laid
in a long time
long day
same place
wrong time
i light up a bone
i talk on the phone
there's nothing doing
there's nobody home
i'm getting high all alone
i'm starting to jones
for a woman or a beer
but there's none of that here
so i go for a stroll
i light up a bowl
i dine on fish sticks
i dance on the ceiling
with the hippie chicks
i pass the joint
i pass gas
my mind is blown
i pass a stone
i pass the buck
i don't give a fuck
i pass out
over and over
and over and out

The big fuck you

this is a big fuck you
for all the gilligans and the skippers
and all the black tie vultures
with their carrion luggage
packed onto planes
like a can full of kippers

all the gimps and the shrimps
and the caesar salad suckups
all the crackerjack backstabbing pimps
all of the screwups
and all of the fuckups

fuck you mrs. calabash
wherever you are
passed out cold with the shingles
in a one-horse singles bar
and fuck you too mr. magoo
with your peanut butter hairdo

fuck the bozos
and the geeks
the freaks and the creeps
fuck 'em all silly
and fuck you chilly willy

No poems

all the theorems have been debunked
all the despots have been defenestrated
the zealots and the zygotes
have been banished from the realm

the uterine walls are spitshine spick 'n' span
the earth is a round place
the mansion is not haunted
the fever has broken
and the exterminators
have done a wonderful job

there are no poems within me
no sonnets eating holes in my woolens
no haikus in the bisquick
and i can get drunk
and stoned and depressed
and i can visit tijuana
with the waikiki brass

but a gibson is not a gibson
without a cocktail onion
and there but for the grace of god go i

2 haiku

women eat breakfast
in a diner and they won't
share their eggs with me

i awake in pain
and yet i would not have it
any other way

The arms of Murphy

the blubber bird
 sat alone in the shrimp nest
it was monday
 and the meter man came knocking
eddy mecca
 was drumming on the dashboard
the meter man was ripshit on rotgut
 and it wasn't even noon
the privy was on the fritz
muffin was locked in the cellar
 her muted barks piqued the meter man's ire
big sister was frenching colonel mustard
 in the gazebo
the meter man hammered the door down
the blubber bird
 shifted uneasily his ponderous bulk
the meter man
 grappled with the frangipanni in the foyer
eddy mecca laughed through his nose
the meter man ripped the phone book in half
eddy mecca
 was drumming on the dashboard
the meter man cudgelled sweet melissa to death
 whilst she slept
mrs. tiggy-winkle reacted with surprise
 that such a crime had come to the fishing hole
and i, i took the road less travelled by

The bottom of the hill

My brother said
there was beer in a keg
they tapped in the woods
over by butler hospital
so I told my friends
and we all got on our three speeds
and pedalled over.

We found the object of our desire
without too much trouble
and soon we were tripping
on slightly warm beer.

Beth got horny
and tried to kiss all the guys
except me
even though her sister told me once
that she liked me
and at some point
I stood up on that sandy hill
and delivered a sermon
or a diatribe
the subject of which escapes me.

Then someone got a little rowdy
and rolled the keg down the hill
and we pedalled shakily home.

I had to tell my brother
to look at the bottom of the hill
when they couldn't find the keg
so he got mad
and punched me a couple times
and I was a little surprised
because it didn't really hurt at all.

He's not so tough.

Tie me off, tie one on

feelin lowdown n funky
feelin like a flat assed junky flunkey
feelin mighty wonky
one messed up honky fucko
strap on those mukluks bucko
shut up that fuckin monkey
put the boots to this
back assed shithole one horse pony show
shovel that crap in a basket
a tisket a tasket
ella fitzgerald don't get around much anymore
soft shoe shufflin off this
spoily shit snake coil
it's all one king sized hell
of a royal pain in the asshole
holy rollers skatin up my crack
crack is wack
smack is wack
but jackin off is jake

Medgar and methyl

medgar was viewing the reruns of his messy divorce while
methyl wept bitter tears into the radicchio, her gingham
wringing wet.

the children were at the drive-in
with their various uncles,
getting fucked up on ripple,
garish madmen crowding the horizon.
methyl wept,
her shuddering shoulders sculpted perfection
and the macaroni was now a shapeless mess.
medgar began
espousing various conflicting doctrines.
the cat was out of the bag
and rubbing up against the fire,
crackling blindly.

“you’re killing me!” methyl managed to stutter.

“on the other hand, fascism does have its virtues...”

said medgar with a gratuitous flourish
of his corncob pipe.

“i can’t take this!” said methyl,
sobs shaping her syllables.
at midnight the children stumbled home
and medgar
removed his penis from the lifeless corpse.

Curly sue

i and curly sue
banging like rabbits
take unto thee this maggot
i said unto her
(it was magic)
don't try to call me a faggot!
i and curly sue
banging like rabbits
jesus god
it was something fantastic
when she took unto her my maggot
oh a lot better than plastic
i and curly sue
drinking bourbon and coke classic
i and curly sue
banging like rabbits

As the days grow long and unruly

As the days grow long and unruly
I think back on those halcyon moonlit nights
when I and Eddie Mecca
ran like noses in the ugly autumn sun
ran like women under the curse
ripping asunder the putrid mist of ennui
guzzling bug-juice
and dipping our toes in the goose pate
playing around and amongst the birds of prey
I and Eddie Mecca
sneaking into the Preakness
and as the days grow long and unruly
I must go down to the sea again
like a patient etherised on a table
my house is in the village though.

Gods eyes

the gods eyes you wove
stare down from the wall
 as if to pierce my soul
but i blow my nose
at this wall eyed god
 of sticks and yarn
for my life is a tissue of lies
caked with the snot
 of a thousand treacherous women
i wanted to be something
but my shoes have been tied
 by the pawns of avarice
 and the stooges
 of detroit, michigan
i thought i saw you
on grand river avenue
 in a burgundy chrysler
with god at the wheel
and death riding shotgun
 but i might be mistaken

Song of joy

smirch me not
with ye festive wigwam
smirch me not
with ye burgundy rye

o god come ye down
with ye pants all akimbo
and trundle me down
to tockwotton square

i love the rocks
that grow to bewilder
and i love how the mildew
comes home every morn

o come ye salt pilgrims
and pebble my goodness
with bourbon, saltpeter
burgundy and rye

I saw the morons

i saw the morons giggling frantically
i was standing in the rain
i heard the curlews weeping
i lay down in the rain
i smelled a thousand sunsets
beating down my door
i crawled into the gutter
the flowers would not let me live
i fled through the sewers
with a box of jujubes
and a bottle of malt liquor
 there will be no more smelling of roses
 there will be no more rhythmical sighing
 the lights will go out
 the heavens will rain with fishes
and i will be in the next room
 gesticulating wildly
 and frothing at the mouth

Song of life

beers to be drunk
and women to be fucked
with great velocity

life is replete
with a plethora
of fabulosity

o come see me soon
preferably in the month of june
and please please pardon my colostomy

Piss in boots

my command of flame
is not what it was
that proud beauty eludes me
though i piss in my boots
 like a fine southern gentleman
and smite only when smitten
and fuck like a bandit
 but only when asked
time was i could burn this juke-joint down
 without spitting sideways
but the light and the warmth
 are not with me now
and winter wants my children

God is sick of America

clouds of fury sweep the skies
eagles tossed like custard pies
into the face of a nation proud
this slapstick prank will be your shroud

muttered oaths are heard on high
the humbled masses eat the pie
they eschew his word and so
the eagle now is just dead crow

God is sick inside his heart
He rips a final deadly fart

The whiskey maiden

what could be more lovely
than the whiskey maiden?
all that weary winter
she came with the dusk
conjured by the waning day
she came
through the drifts
bearing amber nectar
for the dessicated gullets
of the lead befuddled workers
she came to give life
to aching limbs
to strip the paint from our lungs
to reattach
that which had snapped off at the brain-stem
and to set our hearts a-yodelling
most of all she came
to get us liquored up
and how lovely!
ah, but with the season she departed
and now as the days drag on
and my eyes grow salty
i dream of the whiskey maiden
and my heart bangs against my ribs
like a frog in a blender



III. Drunk in Mumble Junction

Down in Mexico

down in mexico
they called us gringos
and we laughed at the cripples
because the mezcal
had destroyed our sensitivity

down in mexico
a man they called el gato
taught us the ways of the silverfish,
the care and breeding of

down in mexico
the dogs and the dirt
filled our nostrils

down in mexico
you could get your dick sucked
for the price of a meal

down in mexico
we almost starved

down in mexico
we lost the use of our limbs
and they laughed at us
and called us gringos
and gave us more mezcal

2 shit poems for richard brautigan

1.

i saw the first robin of spring
drop a load today.
i believe
he was saving it up for me.

2.

i watched something fall
from the ass
of the starling on my clothesline
as i sat on the toilet.
for a moment there
we were collaborators in defecation.

Aloha

aloha from the grave
got the turbines
singin wah-hey
fuckin with yer feet
handlin yer hips
and crinklin the crinoline
spot primin a fever blister
coppin a squat
goofed up on skunkweed
kooky on junk
got no love
no chains
no chance at redemption
my portion of gumption
gone south
down at the mouth
chokin up upchuck
shits creek
floatin face down
hip deep in brown
if the river was whiskey
blah blah blah
put me on that dark slow train
and give my shoes to jack
put a penny on the trestle
and watch me jump the track
my head starts swimming
when i stroke your breast
spread eagle dog paddle
puts my strength to the test
i fall like a stone
from the crows nest
into the brine
all warm and snotty
mouths appear on my body

and start to puke
clotting begins
and zeroes in
my head is focused
but my heart is sucked
like a turd from the bowl
beauty shines forth
as the darkness slams down
i find myself underground
like babe ruth
like a mastodon tooth
like john wilkes booth
it feels okay
it feels alreet
like suckin on the teat
of mommy earth
giver of birth
o dear momma
give me suckle
when i lay down dead
in your big truckle-bed

I overheard epithets

I overheard epithets
though you turned your back
simon was playing mumblety-peg
in the backyard
with no pants on
there was a rhubarb pie on the windowsill
up until five minutes ago
the sun was shining very brightly
and the moon shone down
like a pale moon-pie
bitter tears were shed and
I overheard epithets
my heart cried out within me
i can barely contain my anguish
when i overhear epithets
mom was in the pantry
i think dad was in there too
a plane flew overhead
headed north
mugsy was having his thumb removed
puppies were being born
shaking their floppy ears in consternation
rubbing their milky eyes
and i cried
because of those epithets
that i mentioned earlier

Letter to a fictional governess

thanks for teaching georgina
that flatulent rachmaninoff number
on the sliding scale;
her glissandos reach untoward heights
and her appetite for polk salad
remains rapacious
her eyes have assumed
a crapulous umber lustre
which is pleasing to behold
myrna is flushed with pride
as she totters around the room
the sherry decanter clutched
in her birdlike talons
i sit here on the ottoman
enjoying a pipe
engulfed in that tumultuous reverie
known only in the loving bosom
of ones family

Listen to my head

listen to my head
when i talk to toucan sam
and the sounds composed of vowels
flow into the amazon sun

the cradle has been broken
and the child has awoken
and cast off all these transient things
and tasted of the marrow

a grackle-straddled fence
bespoke a pork-pie hat
and the christmas mailman chortled
like a frosty day at dawn
and i awoke forlorn
like a pewling babe newborn

all these things i know
seem only to denote
the way our dry bones float
and still remain remote

the days peck at my sandy shore
with a dry and fretful timbre
and love is a can of soda
flung from an ebon height
and my heart is a newborn plant
struck by pagan blight

I was hiding in the closet

i was hiding in the closet last night
and i could swear you were there
with the cockroaches and the coathangers
through the mothballs and mohair
i could smell your sweet scent
in the stacks of slacks
and i remembered
you slipping swiftly
past the supper table
past my clumsy grasp
“i have more hot dishes for the table”
you hollered
and i drank my double martini
content in the lap of contentment
and you were handsomer
than my mama’s fancy china
and you pleased my humble mind
just by living
the way the light bounced off your form
stiffened my rods and cones
and i don’t know how i got in the closet

I saw the merganser

i saw the merganser wing across the sky
his plumage done knocked my eye out
i saw him winging
 gently winging
 across the milky moonlit pond
and i saw the maggots swarming on a corpse
and i thought about god and how close he was
i could smell him
god what a stench
o to be alive today
 and tomorrow
 and the rest of my life...
what wouldn't i give...
o the splendiferous treasures
vouchsafed to man
are truly various and manifold-
if you would be my bride
you must go and kiss
the monkeys at the zoo

Hot soup

you are an envelope of hot soup
in my spicy hands
the address is correct
but there's postage due
some settling has occurred
but there are
fist-sized chunks of meat
suspended in that nourishing broth
it's all right there
i need to starve the fever
i am aware
of the benefits of soup
but i can't seem to find
my spoon

The blood of winos

i was a teenage speed freak
the blood of winos runs in my veins
today i bit the head off a troll baby
and carved barbie an asshole
i was feelin' mean!
i like whiskey on my cornflakes
and long walks off short piers
i've eaten more pussy
than your whole neighborhood
and i've got three balls
you wanna go on a date?

Prayer

I will stay in my room today.

I will drink up the vodka.

I will piss in bottles.

I will not wash.

I will consume parts of my body.

I will think clean thoughts.

Sometimes I need to be alone.

Zip's

we were
flirting
with the waitress
and among the things
I forgot
to ask her
were
her name
and
how would you feel if
ants the size of dogs
chewed your legs off
and milked you?

Think

I think i broke my dick
I don't know how it happened
 maybe i fell down
 when i was in bed
it doesn't hurt
but i think i broke my dick

Codger

the codger

burbles a murm'rous mumble...

grumbles and shuffles

with a toothless scuffle

of scuffed bedraggled brogues

tongues flapping blindly

rags a-tatter

matted hair

a kimbo mass

of mussed and musty

mattress stuffing

moth-eaten, mildewed Muldoon

sips his porter

and stumbles off

a crumbling cookie

of a codger...

Gentlemen:

Our last rasher of pemmican gone,
I sent three of the men on a foraging party.
Today we found their scalped remains.
We mumbled a brief prayer and fell to.
The others are reduced to squabbling
over the tastier entrails. Naturally, I pulled rank.
Elsewise, Binky bore nineteen strapping pups
and Mumbles won seven bits off me at canasta
but I think he cheats and me and the boys
are gonna give 'im a whuppin'!

— yer pal Caleb

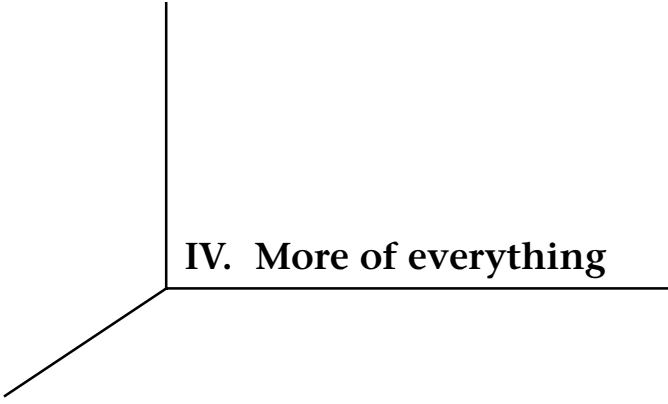
Marbles

i scare me
i wake me up
sweating like cheese
frightened for my welfare
fearful of my marbles
stinking like a bandit
burgling his own camel
and the sun
only brings the rain

I'll be damned

the retired businessman
takes his shirt off
and no-one's the wiser
a cadillac
drives out of the swamp
with a gorilla at the wheel
marshmallows fall into fires
and babies spill from the windows
and the cosmos feels meager today
liquor has lost its allure

i asked gandhi to put in a kind word for me...
to the worms i mean —
go easy on my marrow
it's already been fucked with
and if there's fucking to be done
i'll be fucked
if i don't do the fucking
and i'll be damned
if i let another woman yell at me
for falling asleep
when i'm doing all the work



IV. More of everything

Young and strong

i was healthy in mind and body
and all i lacked was girl germs
but the devil's been breathing on me
my sex has withered
lika a banana in a bag
and my life leaks away in the night
leaving little damp spots on the blanket
but what do i care?
i'm young and strong
socially inept
and sexually dysfunctional
and my life stretches out before me
like a segmented worm...

Remembrance of me

transcend the butchery
and elude the witchery
outflank the constabulary
and purchase a cottage
in the suburbs

get yr lousy mitts
on a jug of wine
and drain the dregs
shop for sundries
and consume yr sorrows
as you would
a fragrant loaf

This town

The day crawls
like an ant
up the crack of my ass.

My brain softens in my skull.
The void stares me in the face
and breathes down my neck.

It's been six months since I last had sex
and before that a year.
Last night I wrote a letter
I had no intention of sending.
My life is a gun
in the hands of a child
and it's been thrust upon me
like a helping of beets.

I need to leave this town.

Sliced Bread

sliced bread don't hold a candle to you
you got all the basic freedoms beat
jesus would give his left stigmata
to nuzzle your pluperfect feet

and there was a time
when i would beg borrow steal
wheedle and cajole
sell my soul to beelzebub
for just one big fat soul kiss
from those exceptional lips

i thought montana
would put you in perspective
but they crammed every goddamn cloud
in the country
into that big sky
and i saw your face in every one

i had this dumb idea
we could clamber into a bathtub
with a sackful of reefer
ears full of bop
you and me and mr. bubble
rub a dub dub
and a jug of cheap red
but rejection is a slow cold shower
love songs are just songs
i'm catching up on my sleep
and i think of you every day
not every hour

The moon took a bite

The moon took a bite out of night
and the night bit back
the blood-dappled factories
leered at the loam
sprouting its calcium crop
the ox carts were full of superheroes
waiting for the dawn
green lantern bit into a hoagie
and remarked on the transience of man
and the masked avenger gave him the finger
for he believed in a higher good
and manifest destiny
and all the shit that was ever shovelled
just then
zeus popped a zit
and the today show had to be cancelled

Back on that prairie

i look back
on those days of desperation
and i see all my friends
having sex
and relationships
and i was a starved rat
eating his heart out
and so concerned
with the consumption
of his own vitals
that opportunity held no water
and sex was a stage on which i could not perform

once a girl
showed me a grave with her name on it
and i had not the wherewithal
nor the guts
to bang her
right there in the midnight cemetery

there were other chances
and i could not get up the nerve
among other things
but eventually i somehow got laid
and i even got pretty good
but now i'm back on that prairie
and in some twisted way
it feels like i'm home again

Freedom

there's a peculiar kind of freedom
in knowing that
if someone handed you
a loaded revolver
you would not hesitate to use it

it's tough being stuck on a sandbar
with your arms cut off
but maybe a stranger
will dislodge me
or my toes
might find the trigger

maybe i'll whimper like a baby
when the time comes
maybe i'll piss my pants
but right now
it's what i want

Worms and dirt

i don't know
how i got home last year
and i have two questions:
how do you bounce back
from waking up with shit in your shorts
and where do bar regulars
go when they die?

if that sixpack was a shotgun
i would end my life every morning.
the parts are cheap
but the labor is killing me
and i can't sink a whole lot lower
so shovel me under
hide my face in worms and dirt
tuck me in
and tiptoe out.

Taint

i can't get outside the nasty shit
and i can't shake the taint

my brain is packed with crap
and my eyes can't hold it in

give me a window
to climb in or jump out of

give me someone
to listen to my snores
someone to sponge me off
 tie my shoes
 and pack my lunch

or give me no-one
and the space to scream alone
 clutch the walls
and curse the firmament

Down in the orchard

goin' nuts with the craziness
hellbound
hog-tied
perched on a pig-pole
in the blue room of doubt
eking out subsistence
from a spent sugar-tit

blood rushes to my toes
the hairs crowd my nostrils
my heart is in my teeth
and all is right with the world

you thought i was in pittsburgh
i was down in the orchard
burying old yeller

if you see me
asleep in a snowdrift
don't wake me
i need the sleep

give me a cloudy day
and dogshit on my shoes
pull down my pants
and get a taste of these blues

you thought that was me at the drive-in
but i was down in the orchard
burying old yeller

i don't throw up anymore
but sometimes i miss it

i'm not sure if i really give a shit
about waco

jonestown

beirut

i will lie down with you

and i will hold you

but i don't own you

this contract is not binding

i think i should leave in the springtime

but summer is upon us

and i am sadly in love

with all the women i've never met

Obvious dream

i had a really obvious dream
the other night —

i was stuck in the corridor
of a mental hospital
and there were all these doors —

some opened onto the wall
some to small empty rooms
and some didn't open at all
but i opened one
and there was a closet
i looked up
and there were two layers
of heavy-duty plastic
and there was roof and sky up there

i woke up before i could bust through
and they were pulling on my legs
but now i know
there may be two layers of heavy-duty plastic
but there's roof and sky up there

Loaded question

where is the harm
in cup after cup
of cinnamon-laced joe
when that infernal interminable leak
pierces my sleep
like hot grease on the brain-pan
sizzling synapses;
why not load on the jittery miseries
til at last i fall back
as if machine-gunned
my body knuckling under
to the fist of profound exhaustion
but the java will not release
this wriggling fish
and i rise in staccato stupor
and kneel to nuzzle and graze
the diminutive translucent carpet-fungi
to fall back at last
a dull blue spume
pulsing from my lips
and a wrenching pain
eviscerating
my scoured bowels?

How I spent my summer vacation

sippin' on a cola
sleepin' in the sunshine
sloggin' to the packy
to get a jug of wine

lovin' everybody
shruggin' off the blues
callin' up your neighbor
to have a cuppa booze

flippin' up a fliptop
chuckin' up a upchuck
pukin' up a porkchop
chokin' up a puck

I am the architect

i am the architect
of the black bean conspiracy
attribute to me alone
the abundance of protein in your diet
i am the friendly flatulence
pervading your pants
and the spanish in your slang

it was i
who maneuvered that first burrito
down your greedy gullet
and assaulted your senses with salse
and this is the thanks that i get
you dance the hat dance without me
and quite well,
i might add

That summer

the lilacs shivered;
a moist breeze bedewed them
with shiny beads
like so many crustaceous anomalies.
a grim bird smirked
a dripping grapefruit grin
and a suckled babe's lispy grumble
smeared the silence.
the boyish murm'rous fragrance
of the bees bumbling
'mongst the tranquil jonquils
subdued and humbled
the piebald magpie:
he surrendered in sluggish servitude
and offered a whimsical symphony.
that summer
seemed to me
an effervescent procession
of sundry melodious
watermelon Mondays.

The only vowel in whirligig

O the buffalo sings
and my heart falls down
 a clatter of loose boards
 a symphony of shards
the whole damn ramshackle shebang
 in pieces at my feet
and I can only blush
 and look for a shovel
while you stare
 and wait for the next course

it should be along any minute

Notes for an unwritten love poem

a bullet the size of kansas
 would fit in my brain quite nicely
i've never been to council bluffs
 but i will
if i have to cross the stream of life
 walking on the backs of salmon
 you can bet i will
if i could sleep with you one more time
 and i will
i will die a happy man
i see you looking over your boyfriend fence
 and there is love in your eyes
but shackles of your own design
 festoon your pretty ankles
 and your head is a well
 you will never climb out of
i am the patsy in this cosmic gyp
 but i want to cut a rug
 i wanna jump ship
she looks at me like i am a bug
 but she don't know what this bug can do
i got the know-how and the do-re-mi
 but that don't mean shit to me
 if i can't know you biblically
i woke up still drunk
 eating pork chops at the sock hop
can't you smell the love?
 it's dripping off me in sheets
and i want your pants in my laundry
i love you so much i could puke
 it's not healthy
 it's killing the shit out of me
maybe we could sleep it off
if you can't handle big time lovin'
 then you're in the wrong aisle

start walking baby
i haven't seen a preacher for miles
yes i will hit you in the head
but it's not a brick
it's love
you gotta trust me on this
i'm stuck with this love
like a big damn wedding cake
but you're full
and you don't like coconut anyway
this brain this heart this penis-
they've been collecting dust
i keep meaning to put them on the curb
but i was hoping
you could take them off my hands

Valentine's day 1999

This sunday
can't we do something different?

instead of
 putting gum in the hymnals
 heckling the priest
 getting the altar boy drunk
 and hogging all the host

instead of
 firebombing the basilica
 flooding the font with succotash
 shoving rosaries up our nosaries
 and ogling the virgin

can't we just
 stay home
 lounging around in long johns
 gargling grappa
 and sucking each other's toes off?

'cuz you're really all the religion i can handle.