

Around The Corner

Misfit Poetry

By Steve Cavin

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Dedication

To Cassandra and Loc Tran, whose
poetry inspired me to keep on going.

To The Reader

When I first started writing poetry, I was mostly worried about what others thought of me and whether or not they'd like my poems. From time to time, a poem would appear that didn't seem to fit with the others, either because it was too controversial or just too weird.

Eventually, these misfits accumulated until I felt they should have a book of their own. Here it is.

Across The Water

In summer and in winter,
Over water, sand and stone,
You and I have fished together,
Now you're ready to go home.

Through tender eyes of childhood,
And years of memories bright,
I see your face, still smiling,
As I held your hand so tight!

I can lean on you no longer,
I alone must find my way.
You have gone across the water,
To a place where I can't stay.

I still see you in my mirror,
I can hear you when I speak.
But you've left a hole behind you,
And it seems my heart must break.

From fishing I learned patience,
And with patience, I will wait.
Till my journey takes me thither,
And you meet me at the gate.

Alone

I'm living at the bottom of a hole.

If I had legs,

I would dig with my feet,

And push myself out.

If I had arms,

I'd take hold of the roots,

And pull myself up.

But I'm living at the bottom of a hole.

I'm lost in the middle of a cloud.

If I had eyes,

I would search the gray mist,

And find my way out.

If I had skin,

I'd inch along the ground,

And feel my way along.

But, I'm lost in the middle of a cloud.

I'm trapped in the silence of the night.

If I had a mouth,

I would shout for help,

And others would lead me away.
If I had ears,
I'd listen for my friends,
And follow them out.
But, I'm trapped in the silence of the night.

I'm alone in the middle of the sea.
If I could swim,
I would keep my head up,
And make my way across the waves.
If I could sail,
I'd sail day and night,
Until I reached the distant shore.
But, I'm alone in the middle of the sea.

Be

Be, or be not.
Stand on your feet,
And show them your face.
If they knock you down,
Open your mouth,
And speak the truth.

If they strike your mouth,
Write down your words,
And pass them around.
If they burn your words,
Take your hands,
And lend them to your brothers and sisters.

If they bind your hands,
Put your strength
And effort into the land.
If they take your land,
Rise up in freedom,
And take to the streets.

If they deny your freedom,
Open your heart,
And overflow with love.
If they cannot accept your love,
Remember who you are.
Be, or be not.

Bodhi

Six-thirty, sign-up ceremony,
Faces, voices, shuffling past.
Bodhi walks in, gently smiling,
And the room is lit at last.

So many of them heavy burdened,
So many bruised, so many wronged.
But everything is easily settled,
When Bodhi sings her song.

Who knows why we came here?
Who knows when we're through?
Bodhi knows who she is, now.
Perhaps she'll tell me, too.

The words are clear, and right, and wise.
The voice is clean, and free of hate.
All you have to do is listen.
Bodhi tells the story straight.

Looking for something I can't remember,
Working on something I can't say.
Bodhi's done the work already.
She's always just a hug away.

The cat's in the aviary,
And Susan's revolving in the air.
Stand and find your own way,
Bodhi sits in God's empty chair

The Book Of Waking Dreams

Between the daily wide awake,
And nightly fade to black.
Amid the things you might have done,
And things you can't take back.
There lies the book of waking dreams,
And stories half-remembered.
When all the fires of the day,
Have cooled to glowing embers.

No daydreams for an afternoon,
Nor terrors of the night.
No monstrous nightmares, half-believed,
Nor stories that delight.
But dreams that often seem so real,
You'd think you were awake.
A blend of what you think and feel,
Whose truth is what's at stake.

I've seen a place I'd like to be,
And walked the yard outside.
I've folded space, and climbed a tree,
Took bubbles for a ride.
I've hidden from a murderous mob,
Stood naked in a crowd.
I've flown and fallen, broken rules,
Exceeding what's allowed.

To awaken from a dream, and find
That things are not quite right.
Then wake again, a second time,
In bed, at morning light.
You ask yourself, which one is real,
And which is make-believe?
How many more, has God in store,
And what's that up his sleeve?

You have to wonder, is it so?
It's slippery at best.
To question what you cannot know,
Put reality to the test.
A lucid dream, or concrete fact?
How far does it go?
You have to guess, until you act,
You'll never really know.

Boundary

There is a boundary,
Somewhere between,
Where I begin,
And where you end.

Compassion and meddling,
Generosity and waste,
Earnestness and overkill,
Economy and deprivation.

There is a boundary,
Mind your own business,
Too much information!
They can take care of themselves.

Rights and obligations,
Friends and acquaintances,
Freedom and isolation
Want and need.

There is a boundary,
Me and you,
Us and them.
Don't burden me with your problems!

Charity and survival,
Community and self-actualization.
What would life be like
Without that boundary?

Candle

A candle could
Be said to be,
A bit of string and wax.
But a child will tell you,
Straight away,
It's light the candle lacks.

No one draws
A candlestick,
Without a crown of flame.
And if it flickers,
Or is blown out,
The candle's not to blame.

Once lit it can't
Forever last,
But slowly will melt down.
A candle that
Is never lit,
Isn't worth the keeping 'round.

Don't you think
It passing strange,
By nature's own decree?
A candle
Must consume itself,
To fully come to be.

Christian

Do you know Jesus?

You say you believe in Jesus,

But what do you believe, exactly?

Can you believe something without knowing it?

Can you know something without understanding it?

Have you heard what Jesus said?

Have you lived what Jesus taught?

Do you know Jesus?

Do you know Jesus?

Jesus talked with thieves and prostitutes.

You talk to someone who isn't there.

Jesus healed strangers, for free.

You won't pay for your neighbor's health care.

Jesus asked everyone not to kill anyone.

You send your children to kill people you don't even
know.

Do you know Jesus?

Do you know Jesus?
Where does he live?
Does he have brown eyes?
Does he have any brothers or sisters?
Does he like fast food?
Does he have a sense of humor?
You know your friends.
Do you know Jesus?

Do you know Jesus?
Jesus blessed the poor, the meek.
Jesus forgave those who hurt him.
Jesus loved everyone, every one.
Jesus refused to lie, even to save himself.
Jesus worshipped God,
But you worship Jesus.
Do you know Jesus?

Cup of Kindness

You don't need a pile of gold,
You don't need a brilliant speech.
You don't need to be brave and bold,
And you don't need to help or teach.
Shut your mouth, for just this once,
Keep your silence, for a change.
A cup of kindness, ounce for ounce,
Is easy to arrange.

You can be the best and brightest,
You can be a rising star.
You can be as rich as Midas,
But you're just fine as you are.
Life is not a game to win,
But an chance to help another.
A cup of kindness, and you begin
To see a little farther.

We can reach the top together,
We can share the golden prize.
We can brave the roughest weather,
With a sparkle in our eyes.
I can't tell you how to get there,
I can't tell you what to do.
A cup of kindness, not a prayer,
Is what I'll give to you.

Dead Horse

Those who won't take "no" for an answer,
Aren't really listening.
To fail at getting what you want,
Involves a sort of christening.
You might keep trying, anyhow,
But find you don't know when,
"No" means you should stop right now,
And start all over again

Determination gets things done,
You'd be a fool to quit.
But only a fool can't give up,
And that's the truth of it.
Life cannot be lived by rules,
Or vows that one must keep.
A wise man seeks another way,
When the river gets too deep.

Comes the time it can't be done,
The obstacle won't yield.
When trying harder doesn't help,
The damage can't be healed.
When "no" is no, and can't be changed,
You need a kind of grace.
To give it up, and let it go,
With a smile upon your face.

The problem is, you'll never know,
How close you were to winning.
You might have actually won the game,
Had you played another inning.
You only know the choice you made,
And the choice that you did not.
Second thoughts, and old regrets,
Are better off forgot.

Dirty Rainbow

Got something to eat,
Some clothes, to keep warm,
And a roof, to keep out the rain.

Isn't it enough?

What are you complaining for?
Lots of folks have less than that,
So be glad, shut up,
And go back to sleep.

Breathe, count the breaths.

Sit down, be quiet, be still.

The torrent of thoughts and feelings,
Washes over, and through you.

Don't get caught up,

Don't go chasing after it,

Watch it come, watch it go,

You are what you are, no matter what.

You woke up this morning
And you were already waiting.
When you wake up tomorrow,
You will still be here.

Not only now,
But every tomorrow,
For the rest of your life.
And after that, who knows?

You might as well face it.
Everything external changes,
But everything internal remains the same.
Learn something, earn something,
Make something, or burn something.
Who were you before?
Who are you now?
Who will you be, tomorrow?

Driving On Empty

Sittin' by the road,
Wonderin' what comes next.

I gave it all I got,
And I gave it my best.

Life is movin' on,
Leavin' me behind.

Empty dreams,
In an empty mind.

Thought I knew it all,
Knew just what to do.
Thought I'd live my dreams,

Make 'em all come true.

Thinkin' that my heart,
Was the thing to trust.

A handful of wind,
And a bit of dust.

But I,
Can't wait forever.
And I,
Can't wait too long.
So I,
Gotta take my chances,
And move on.

Had a wife and kids,
Raised a family.
Loved 'em all I could,
And I think they loved me.
Grown and moved away,
See 'em once in a while.
I think about those days,
And it makes me smile.

Wasn't thinkin' hard,
About what to do.
Workin' at a job,
But I never knew.
Time will come,
When you're looking back.
Time to measure up,
What it meant at last.

But I,
Can't wait forever.
And I,
Can't wait too long.
So I,
Gotta take my chances,
And move on.

Echo

Mother,
You listened to me,
All my life.
All my thoughts,
All my troubles.
Now I'm listening to you.

Mother,
You were not
The one who bore me,
But you accepted me,
A son in need,
With a kind and gentle hand.

Mother,
You were always there.
You fed me, clothed me,
Helped me stand up straight.
From you I learned to love
That kid in the mirror.

Mother,
You were solid as a rock,
Gentle as a breeze.
Working through
The challenges of life,
Showing us how it's done.

Mother,
You've gone beyond my reach.
Speaking to me now,
As you echo through my being.
You were a great mother,
And you were mine.

Excuse Me

Excuse me.

I was just thinking,
I mean, I thought you might,
I guess I shouldn't have.

Excuse me.

Excuse me.

I was just saying,
I mean, I said we could,
I guess I shouldn't have.

Excuse me.

Excuse me.

I was just doing,
I mean, I did what felt right,
I guess I shouldn't have.

Excuse me.

Excuse me.
I was just being,
I mean, I was trying to show you,
I guess I shouldn't have.
You see?

Falling Up

I thought I had to
Obey my parents,
And never make a sound.

I thought I had to
Be like my friends,
Just to keep them around.

I thought I had to
Listen to my teacher,
To get good grades.

I thought I had to
Follow the boss's orders,
To get paid.

I thought I had to
Look like others, and
Choose carefully what to say.

I thought I had to
Stay within the rules,
To keep the police away.

I thought I had to
Avoid bad words,
To write a poem or song.

I thought I had to
Please my wife,
Just to get along.

I thought I had to---
I thought I had to---
I thought I had to---
(But I didn't!)

For Nothing

Imagine
Just for a moment,
A life other than your own.
And ask yourself why
Would you ever spend
Your time that way.

Just imagine
Collecting other people's garbage,
Cleaning other people's toilets,
Preparing other people's meals.
Trimming other people's yards,
Building other people's roads.

Really, imagine
Teaching other people's children,
Fixing other people's cars,
Healing other people's illnesses,
Protecting other people's homes,
Listening to other people's problems.

I imagine
That you've always been right there.
Turning people into profits,
Gardens into graveyards,
Children into chattel,
And misery into money.

Thanks.
Thanks for nothing.

Hero

One who kills is not a hero,
A hero defends those in danger.
One who says great things is not a hero,
A hero's words turn away anger.

One who starves is not a hero,
A hero brings starving to an end.
One who defeats enemies is not a hero,
A hero turns an enemy into a friend.

One who wins is not a hero,
A hero inspires others to do their best.
One who serves his country is not a hero,
To do what's right is the real test.

One who dies is not a hero,
A hero prevents another's fall.
One who destroys bad things is not a hero,
A hero creates good things for all.

One who achieves excellence is not a hero,
A hero forgives the faults of others.
One who is strong is not a hero,
A hero finds strength among his brothers.

One who holds on is not a hero,
A hero gives all he has, for free.
One who cares for the world is not a hero,
A hero cares for his family.

One who faces death is not a hero,
A hero keeps others from the flame.
One who becomes famous is not a hero,
A hero doesn't have a name.

Holes

When something arises, it requires a place.

It varies in size, but nonetheless, space.

A simple location, a source you can trace,

To even be noticed at all.

If it's not one thing, it's another they say.

Every day turns to night, every night into day.

Things come and go, in much the same way,

Whether huge or very small.

In fact, you yourself, hold a space that you fill.

Into it you pour your effort and skill.

Anyone could, but no one else will,

It's entirely up to you.

If you didn't do it, then someone else would.

If you didn't say it, then someone else could.

If you didn't think it, someone else should,

So be mindful of what you do.

In Between

I never gave you my heart,
But the door was opened wide.
I never forced you to take part,
But I offered you a ride.

I never told you what to do,
But I helped to carry the load.
I never took you, it is true,
But I put your feet on the road.

I never told you what to say,
But I questioned what you said.
I never made you see it my way,
But I listened instead.

I never asked you to give in,
But I never left the scene.
I didn't lose, I didn't win,
But hung out in between.

In Newfoundland

While walking to the pub one day,
I passed a stranger on the way.
He told me all he had to say,
And quickly moved along.
Now, normally I'd let it go,
But asked him "Sir, I'd like to know
If all the things you say are so?"
He told me in a song.

In England, you've got pubs galore,
In Germany, you'll ask for more,
And in the States, the beer is poor,
Although they say it's grand.
Listen to me now, my son,
For beer and girls and lots of fun,
The best of all, and the least of none,
You'll find in Newfoundland!

The biggest man you've ever seen,
Known to all as Bobby Green,
Found the pub somewhere between,
His work and his front door.
His mug they say had a terrible leak,
He drained it fast as you could speak.
I heard it took them nearly a week,
To get him off the floor.

In England, you've got pubs galore,
In Germany, you'll ask for more,
And in the States, the beer is poor,
Although they say it's grand.
Listen to me now, my son,
For beer and girls and lots of fun,
The best of all, and the least of none,
You'll find in Newfoundland!

Sittin' at the corner table,
A working girl, the beauteous Mable,
Gracefully as she was able,
Guzzling down a brew.
A daring mate, her cheek he kissed.
She struck him squarely with her fist,
And said "Don't cross me off your list,
But buy me a beer or two.

In England, you've got pubs galore,
In Germany, you'll ask for more,
And in the States, the beer is poor,
Although they say it's grand.
Listen to me now, my son,
For beer and girls and lots of fun,
The best of all, and the least of none,
You'll find in Newfoundland!

Machinery

Who drives the car?
Who sweeps the floor?
Who plays the guitar?
Who opens the door?

Air-conditioner, or a shady tree.
Water pipes, or a river flowing.
The radio, or songs for free.
A motorcar, or bare feet going.

Turn off your stove, and light a fire.
Turn off your television, and tell a story.
Turn off your lamp, and the moon admire.
Turn on your brain, and take inventory!

Drop the fence, and share the land.
Drop the law, and trust what's good.
Take hold now of my outstretched hand.
Take what you need, not what you could.

Keep what doesn't run away.
Accept what comes without a price.
Trust what they do, not what they say.
Take it all, not just a slice.

Manage The Wind

Why do you try
To manage the wind?
To steer the stars,
And make the trees bend?
Wind finds its way
Without your command.
It doesn't matter
What you have planned.

Why do you try
To cover the earth?
To pave or control
The place of your birth?
The earth is below
Everything you see.
Every man-made thing,
Every rock and tree.

Why do you try
To move the waters?
To drain the rivers,
The rain man's daughters?
Diverting the stream
That runs to the sea.
Unwilling to simply
Let things be.

Why do you try
To conquer time?
To last forever,
Or stop on a dime?
Events will not follow,
What a man expects.
Do you control
What happens next?

No Doubt

No doubt, there's a heaven above us.
No doubt, there's a prize at the end.
No doubt, there's a Father to love us,
And help will arrive from a friend.

Surely, this world has a reason.
Surely, hard work will yield gain.
Surely, suffering has its reward.
There's paradise after the pain.

Of course, we don't understand it.
Of course, it's part of the plan.
Of course, we need to be patient.
We'd change it, but nobody can.

Have faith, and God will protect you.
Have faith, and you've nothing to fear.
Have faith, it's all as it should be.
Your prayers will be answered, next year.

Ask why, and wait for the the answer.

Ask why, and think carefully.

Ask why, and you may notice,
There's no reason not to be free.

Outlaw

I look into another's face,
But I'm not there.
Members of the human race,
But what do we share?
I speak in words they know,
But they're not hearing me.
Caught, in the persistent flow
Of some personal reverie.

I truly don't remember when
I broke some kind of law.
Stepped across a line, and then
Exhibited a character flaw.
Judged, though never once accused,
Sentenced without court or trial.
Ignorant of the standards used,
Banished to a life of denial.

I reach out, and they turn away,
While staring right at me.
For my crime, I have to pay,
Being both exiled, and free.
I no longer have the keys,
All the locks have changed.
A virtual ghost, if you please,
A brother, but estranged.

Waiting for an invitation,
Living out a curse.
Injured by their indignation,
But being ignored is worse.
I'm not keen to win or lose,
I just want to play.
One more time, I stand and choose,
What to be today.

Outside Your Door

I've given you my money,
Everything has got a price.
Your body's warm and open,
But your soul's as cold as ice.

Your hair lyin' on a pillow,
Your dress lyin' on a chair.
I gaze into your half-closed eyes,
Though I know there's nothin' there.

Layin' down before me,
Like you laid a thousand times before.
Know that you won't know my name,
Once I step out,
Outside your door.

You know your moves and angles,
You do your lovin' well.
It's work, and you've got to make the most,
Of what you've got to sell.

Feelin' good, but empty,
And not quite satisfied.
Feelin' good, but not so good,
Like something in me just died.

Layin' down before me,
Like you laid a thousand times before.
Know that you won't know my name,
Once I step out,
Outside your door.

Someday I'll be leavin',
And never coming back.
I know you've heard those words before,
And you know the truth they lack.

I wish I'd never opened,
The door that holds me so.
I've heard there's always a way out,
But I guess I'll never know.

Layin' down before me,
Like you laid a thousand times before.
Know that you won't know my name,
Once I step out,
Outside your door.

Over The Hill

It's all done now.
Fifty-eight years
Of dreaming and scheming,
Toil and trouble,
Roller-coaster ride.
Reaching for the stars,
A never-ending story, but
It's all done now.

It's all the same now.
Every place I go,
I've been before.
Every face I see,
I've seen before.
Every thought, and every feeling,
Familiar as my own reflection, but
It's all the same now.

It's all washed up now.
A wave gathering near the shore,
Rose up beneath me,
Carried me along,
And left me behind,
Despite all my cleverness,
And decades of experience, but
It's all washed up now.

It's all changed now.
A new game, with new players.
I hardly know what to say,
Or even what to think.
A stranger in a strange land.
No brothers or sisters in the street,
We tried to share the world, but
It's all changed now.

Proverbs

Don't shout, when the lion's about.

Don't squawk, get up and walk.

Don't complain, you can't stop the rain.

Don't kick, you don't get to pick.

Don't run, if you are the one.

Don't blame, take better aim.

Don't fear, love is near.

Don't cry, let it go by.

Don't scoff, brush it off.

Don't fold, a winner is bold.

Don't cheat, admit defeat.

Don't insist, only persist.

Don't pose, admire the rose.

Don't whine, things are fine.

Don't wallow, pain is hollow.

Don't shove, follow the dove.

Quotes

The past and future exist only in your mind.
You have a choice. In fact, that is all you ever had.

If you haven't done it, you don't know it.
The world contains more than can be said.
Not everything that is true, can be proved.

To kiss someone, you must be kissed.

"I don't know" is a very good answer.

Success teaches me what works,
Failure teaches me what doesn't.

When in doubt, give yourself to love.

You can't hate the future,
And you can't fear the past.

Everything that exists is unique. So what?

I am not you.

The customer may not know what they want.

You don't know what you don't know.

Fear cancels thought, and prevents action.

Delay may or may not improve a decision.

Think what is best, do what is good enough.

You can't change anyone.

If you want something, ask for it.

Give more than you take.

Relaxation is more effective than tension.

Ideas exist in general. Things exist in specific.

Some things just happen,

It happens more often than you think.

The mind is a powerful tool,

But a jealous master.

Use what you have, give what you can.

Regret is worse than failure.

Seeking is better than finding.

Listen to others, decide for yourself.

Appreciate your gifts,

Overcome your weaknesses.

Losing strengthens patience,

Suffering teaches compassion.

Road To Somewhere

Standing on a road to somewhere,
Waiting for a ride to come.
Wheels to take me where I'm goin',
But how can I go home?

Faces pass me on the highway.
Some are lonely, some alone.
All of us are goin' somewhere,
But how can I go home?

In a play of joy and sorrow,
On a stage of space and time.
Yesterday, was once tomorrow,
Left behind, I don't mind.

Tripping easy through my memory,
Thoughts and words and friends I've known.
As I go, they're going' with me,
But how can I go home?

Take account of all your lifetime,
All you've lost, and all you've gained.
And you'll find me on the highway,
In the rain, once again.

Standing on a road to somewhere,
Waiting for a ride to come.
Wheels to take me where I'm goin',
But how can I go home?

Sandy

I stand with winter's wind behind me,
And think of people, come and gone.

I still remember a gentle girl,

A mind so free, and I ---

Look around and Sandy's there,

Smiling face and soft blond hair,

Sandy take my cares away,

Sandy.

We'd spend the evenings close together,

When even time, was on our side.

And in the darkness there beside me,

A touch so warm, and I ---

Look around and Sandy's there,

Smiling face and soft blond hair,

Sandy take my cares away,

Sandy.

Now every street, is looking lonely,
Feel like the lost half of a pair.
And then a voice, soft and faded,
Calls my name, and I ---
Look around and Sandy's there,
Smiling face and soft blond hair,
Sandy take my cares away,
Sandy.

Satisfaction 44

Satisfaction
Wealth contraction
Mass confusion
Truth extrusion

Rebel faction
Blast impaction
Self-importance
Word discordance

False discussion
Brain concussion
Wrong conclusion
Mass delusion

Teen depression
Senate session
Obsolescence
Clueless peasants

Non-essential
Preferential
Sin confessing
Social messing

Secret mission
Statistician
Constitution
Absolution

Blind religion
Tunnel vision
Holy virgin
Armed incursion

Hate conception
Smooth deception
Blanket bombing
Second coming

Law suspension
Growing tension
Lame epistles
Guided missiles

Greedy hoarding
Water boarding
Emasculation
Degradation

Troop reduction
Cosmic suction
No reaction
Satisfaction

Sea Queen

Hail to the Sea Queen,
Sail on to your dreams.
Softly sail, 'cross the waves.
Sailor, don't you hear her voice?
Move by the grace,
Of the Sea Queen.

Far are the islands,
Long is the shore,
Wide the horizon,
Deep is the sea.

Hail to the Sea Queen,
Sail on to your dreams.
Softly sail, 'cross the waves.
Sailor, don't you hear her voice?
Move by the grace,
Of the Sea Queen.

Sail on, 'cross an emerald table.
Loose your bond with the land.
Sea and sky tell an ancient tale,
For those who will hear, and can understand.

Hail to the Sea Queen,
Sail on to your dreams.
Softly sail, 'cross the waves.
Sailor, don't you hear her voice?
Move by the grace,
Of the Sea Queen.

The Sea Queen laughs, and throws her head.
The waves will crash and toss.
The wind will howl, the boat will cry,
The Sea Queen claims her lost.

Hail to the Sea Queen,
Sail on to your dreams.
Softly sail, 'cross the waves.
Sailor, don't you hear her voice?
Move by the grace,
Of the Sea Queen.

Soft As The Dawn

Soft as the dawn,
Moist as the dew,
Sweetly I've taken
These kisses from you.
Light as a feather,
Smooth as a stone,
The best alternative
To a life alone.

You are in me, now,
And I in you,
Partly illusion
And partly true.
Faithful companion,
Closest friend,
There beside me
Right to the end.

Stillness

Stillness,
In a bus stop.
Tranquility,
At the train station.
Listening,
For a raindrop.
Settling,
Of perspiration.

Pause,
As thoughts end.
Far away,
A distant hill.
Recall,
An afternoon with a friend.
Brace,
Against the winter chill.

Why?
The ever-present question.
How
To fill the book of days?
Where
To go? A slight suggestion.
Who
Decides between the ways?

Being
Free without a purpose.
Now
Is all I have to face.
Here,
Upon the world's surface.
I
Sit beside the human race.

The Beauty

Look about you,
Do you not see the beauty?
The first light of dawn,
And the last glimpse of twilight.

The deep, dark, blackness
Of a twig, moistened by the rain.
The rough, spotted surface.
Of the sidewalk, in an old part of town.

The top of a leaf, is a different green,
Than the color underneath.
And, can you imagine the shiny reddish brown,
Of the earthworms in the roots below?

The tears of a young child,
Glisten as they run down his cheek.
And his hair smells fresh and sweet,
As he falls asleep in your lap.

The world out my back door,
Is filled by the clicks and whistles,
Of things I only occasionally
Have the honor of seeing directly.

My aunt's skin is dry, and wrinkled,
The white page is smooth and spotless.
The world itself is changing always,
Though not as quickly as I am.

In the sky, there are more shades of blue
Than I could ever count, or name.
From within my sadness, a voice is asking,
Do you not see the beauty?

The Price

You don't like it,
Those critical remarks,
The daily grind,
And all those sparks.
"It's OK", you say
Swallowing your tea,
Laced with covert bad intent,
Another bargaining plea.

You don't want it,
Those crumbs of compliments,
Spoon-fed, rationed kindnesses,
And murderous implements.
"It's OK", you say
Deadenning your voice.
Pretending to victimized,
As if you had no choice.

You don't agree with it,
A life of second-class.
Let the other guy go first,
And keep off of the grass.
"It's OK", you say
And slowly walk away.
Satisfied with the thought,
You'll make a change, someday.

You can't change it,
The chance to act has passed.
A storehouse of silent objections,
And still-born dreams amassed.
"It's OK," you say,
To second-hand advice.
But in your heart of hearts you ask,
Is security worth the price?

Tokyo Train

The Tokyo train
Is running late.
She sits, half asleep,
Her edge worn, and dull,
A face with no expression.

On the other side
The Korean bachelor,
From time to time,
Steals a glance,
Then looks at his watch.

The Tokyo train
Is running late.
She no longer remembers,
Or tries to forget,
Why she is here.

The fresh young women,
Firm, smooth flesh.
High boots, stockings,
And short, short skirts,
Stride confidently to their seats.

The Tokyo train
Is running late.
It's been running late for years.
A dying race. a fading culture,
Hurries to extinction.

So buoyant their voices
Chirping echoes in the tunnels.
Half asleep, and half-awake
They sway and nod,
Waiting for their stop.

True Or False

You cannot make
Something true,
By wanting it to be.
No matter how many tears you cry,
Only true is true,
And nothing else will do.

You cannot make
Something true,
By believing it to be.
No matter how many books you write,
Only true is true,
And nothing else will do.

You cannot make
Something true,
By telling it to be.
No matter how many words you say,
Only true is true,
And nothing else will do.

You cannot make
Something true,
By forcing it to be.
No matter how many people you hurt,
Only true is true,
And nothing else will do.

Warm Winds

Warm winds are blowin',
Far away from the storm I know.
Evenin' sun is glowin'
Gone so long ago.

Warm winds are blowin',
Just ahead and down the road.
Like a river, flowin' away,
Find some place to go.

Move on, move on,
Catch your dream, before it's gone.

When will we ever learn?
Love is to give, and not to own.
When will we ever learn?
We must be small, before we're grown.
But will we ever learn?

Warm winds are blowin',

Blowin' back the years gone by.
Change is part of growin',
Got no time to cry.

Warm winds keep blowin',
Some will stay, and wonder why.
Got to keep on, goin' on,
Live before I die.

Move on, move on.
You'll be gone before too long.

When will we ever learn?
Faith is a far greater force than doubt.
When will we ever learn?
Life is what life is all about.
But will we ever learn?

Warm winds,
Warm winds,
Warm winds.

Wasteland

For every one of us
Who broke through,
There are a hundred more
Behind the wall.

Every one,
A voice worth listening to.

Every one,
A gift meant for us all.

What becomes
Of the bell not rung,
The dish untouched,
The light unseen?
Chained to jobs,
Or situations.
Left behind,
The might have been.

And if they sang,
You didn't listen.
And when they knocked,
You closed the door.
Who shows up,
And who is missing.
Few are the chances
Offered the poor.

Some will win,
And some will lose.
Some will gain,
And some will pay.
But missing from
The bustling crowd,
Are those who never
Got to play.

We

They live in the air we breathe,
We kill them off with medicine and antibodies.

They live in the ground we walk on,
We step on them on our way to work.

They live in nests in the trees,
We cut down trees and put up buildings.

They live in the waters,
We dump garbage into the waters.

They live in the wild,
We tame the wild, and put up fences.

They live in captivity,
We feed them, and eat their babies.

They live in foreign countries,
We take their resources, and bomb them.

They give all they have to make a living,
We take all they have and make a fortune.

They watch their children suffer,
We watch movies, and take vacations.

It's not about right and wrong,
It's about us and them.
It's not about good and bad,
It's about who we are, and who we aren't.
It's not about those that don't matter,
You simply don't matter at all.

When The Well Runs Dry

Drive an hour each way to work.

Take what you can steal.

Eat from the far side of the Earth,

Drink booze with every meal.

You still have time to laugh,

And there will be time to cry.

What you gonna do,

When the well runs dry?

Dump poison in the ground,

And poison in the air.

Throw your garbage all around,

As if you didn't care.

There is only so much land,

And only so much sky.

What you gonna do,

When the well runs dry?

Cheat your lovers,
And burn your friends.
Burn the candle
From both ends.
Ignore your neighbor,
And live a lie.
What you gonna do,
When the well runs dry?

Pay to play,
And never loose.
Define yourself
By what you choose.
What you are,
Is what you buy.
What you gonna do,
When the well runs dry?

About The Author

Steve Cavin grew up in a small town in southeast Michigan, about an hour north of Detroit. At the age of 17, he began camping out in the backyard, testing out his tent, sleeping bag, and stove. At 18, he left home with fifty-seven dollars, and began hitchhiking west around the world. Four years and 30,000 miles later he returned, with eleven dollars and a Chinese fiancée.

Mr. Cavin has worked many different jobs, crewing sailboats in California, picking fruit in Australia, teaching English in Hong Kong, fishing in the Israeli desert, and packing coffee in England. He now works as a software engineer in Silicon Valley, where he lives with his wife and three

sons. He practices archery, runs meditation retreats in the mountains, and hosts an open microphone in the local coffee shop, where he tells stories and reads his poetry.