

# Echoes From Earth

A Collection Of Poems

*By Steve Cavin*

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# Dedication

To George and Genevieve, and Margaret and Pat, who never gave up. I love you.

# To The Reader

There are things that cannot be said. There are feelings that cannot be spoken. Poetry is the art of pointing at these; of dancing about them until the reader recognizes an old friend, dimly remembered. Something familiar, heard at last for the first time.

Join me now on that journey, and let's make poetry together.

Growth

# A Dragon Came To Stay

A lovely dragon came to stay,  
The other day, from far away.  
So beautiful was she.  
And though I tried  
To run and hide, at last I cried,  
And asked her please to stay with me.

We loved, and kissed, and cried and fought,  
As lovers ought, or so I thought,  
While days turned into years.  
We thought we'd always feel the same,  
She took my name, the children came,  
Our laughter mixed with tears.

At last there came a time and place.  
We had to face, we'd lost all trace,  
Of love and truth and feeling.  
We thought we'd better separate,  
Before our fate, could turn to hate,  
And caring turned to dealing.

We tried our best to let it go.  
We didn't know, how to make it so.  
And so we stayed together.  
To spare the children broken hearts,  
We learned the art, to play our parts,  
And bear it like bad weather.

But reality will not be cheated,

We were defeated. A love depleted,  
Can't live without respect.  
The biting word, the silent wars,  
They bore the scars, the fault was ours,  
An inevitable shipwreck.

The lesson now is very clear.  
Stand by me near, so you will hear,  
And pray don't take it lightly.  
A dragon and a dreamer learned,  
That both concerned, can still get burned,  
From holding on too tightly.

## A Woman's Tears

A woman's tears are salty  
As the water in the sea.  
A woman's sweat is salty, too.  
If you doubt it, taste and see!  
A woman's milk is life itself  
To the baby in her arms.  
A woman's sons will spill their blood

To keep her safe from harm.  
A young man's heart is full of dreams,  
Of what his life will bring,  
An old man's heart can bitter be  
From disappointment's sting.  
A rich man counts his money,  
So afraid that he'll lose out.  
A poor man counts his blessings,  
And the things he does without.

A child's mind is open  
To wander where it may.  
A child's heart is open, too.  
Be careful what you say.  
A child's hands and feet are small  
And go 'most everywhere.  
A child's words are seldom heard  
As if we didn't care.

A person's life is not a book,  
The story is unwritten.  
A person who plans carefully,  
Will sometimes still get bitten.  
A person's life, for good or ill,  
Is filled by what they choose.  
There's nothing here to face but fear,  
And nothing here to lose.

# Baker Beach

Sometimes  
I'd rather be  
At Baker Beach.  
Seagulls flying  
On the constant wind.

Waves crashing  
On the light brown sand.  
And seagulls flying.

Children running  
To nowhere in particular.  
And waves crashing,  
And seagulls flying.

People baking  
Wrapped in skin and suntan oil.  
And children running,  
And waves crashing,  
And seagulls flying.

The smell of salt water  
Seaweed, shells and foam.  
And people baking,  
And children running,  
And waves crashing,  
And seagulls flying.

Sand grinding  
Beneath bare feet.  
And the smell of salt water,  
And people baking,  
And children running,  
And waves crashing,  
And seagulls flying.

The sun shouting  
The stark light of reality.  
And sand grinding,  
And the smell of salt water,  
And people baking,  
And children running,  
And waves crashing,  
And seagulls flying.  
At Baker Beach  
Sometimes.

## Child's Play

Today I'm the captain,  
Of a ship at sea.  
With waves at my bow,  
And men who follow me.  
The farther we sail,  
The nearer we're free.  
Such is the life of a captain.

Today I'm the chief  
Of the Cherokee.  
My braves ride and hunt  
The boundless prairie.  
The Great Spirit's song  
On the wind's melody.  
Such is the life of a chief.

Today I'm an astronaut,  
Walking in space.  
Floating above  
The whole human race.  
The coldness and stars,  
Held in heaven's embrace.  
Such is the life of an astronaut.

Today I'm a scientist,  
At work in my castle.  
Cooking up monsters,

With whom I can wrestle.  
Saving the world,  
If it's not too much hassle.  
Such is the life of a scientist.

Suddenly I  
Am myself again.  
A clever young cub  
Of nine or ten.  
I'll grow up someday,  
But I'll play until then.  
Such is the life of a child.

# Earth Prayer

Mother Earth,  
Take me home.  
Father Sky,  
Break my chains.

Sister River  
Wash my bones.  
Brother Tree,  
Take my pain.

Grandmother Smoke,  
Cleanse my soul.  
Grandfather Rock,  
Make me whole.

Mother Earth,  
Take me home.  
Mother Earth,  
Take me home.

# Embarcadero

Strollin' on the Embarcadero,  
Walkin' the moon along the Bay.  
Kickin' round my mind,  
Tryin' to find,  
A better way.

Strollin' on the Embarcadero,  
Walkin' alone and feelin' free.  
Got no blues,  
Just my shoes,  
And me.

Maybe we'll meet some foggy morning.  
Behind your face, a hidden flame.  
You'll flash that smile, and without warning  
You'll take my hand, and take my name.

Strollin' on the Embarcadero,  
Nobody here but the moon and me.  
Easy pace,  
Wind on my face,  
Beside the sea.

## Like Sunday

I love you, like Sunday,  
A refuge, and a rest.  
Let it fall away, for a day,  
And lay my face upon your breast.  
Holiest of holies,  
In the space between our hearts.  
Break it down, clean it up,  
And put back the missing parts,  
Like Sunday.

I love you, like Monday,  
Return to work and toil.  
The kids need a bath, a ride, a meal,  
Some milk, and eggs, and cooking oil.  
Drive down that road again,  
Smile into my boss's face.  
Pay the bills, ease the ills,  
Turn the wheel and hold my place,  
Like Monday.

I love you, like Tuesday,  
For what is yet to be.  
Your beauty overwhelms my fears,  
Your love is true and wild and free.  
We'll make it what we choose,  
We'll never die or fall.  
Hold on tight, with all our might,

Stand and fight, to have it all.  
Like Tuesday

I love you, like Wednesday,  
Keep on, keep on.  
Work together, day by day  
Build a bridge to stand upon.  
Watching you through passing years,  
As you grow into your face.  
Who are you, and who am I?  
What are we doing in this place?  
Like Wednesday.

I love you, like Thursday,  
Getting things done.  
Introducing order,  
Where there was none.  
What you want, and what I want,  
Setting them in motion.  
Making love, and making plans,  
With patience and emotion,  
Like Thursday.

I love you, like Friday,  
At the end, a prize.  
The wages of love and diligence,  
And that look in your eyes.  
The children talk and chirp like birds,  
Like birds they fly away.  
Giving love, and taking love,  
And keeping love this way.  
Like Friday.

I love you, like Saturday  
Time to play at last.  
Celebrate the mystery,  
Forget about the past.  
Recreate ourselves anew,  
Explore what love has shown,  
Fall in love again, again,  
To travel roads we long have known,  
Like Saturday.

I love you, like Sunday,  
A refuge, and a rest.  
Let it fall away, for a day,  
And lay my face upon your breast.  
Holiest of holies,  
In the space between our hearts,  
Break it down, clean it up,  
And put back the missing parts,  
Like Sunday.

## Love Poem

Oh Beloved,  
Creator of all things,  
Let us never be apart.

When I listen, let me hear your voice.  
When I speak, let it be of you.  
And when I look, let me find you in my heart.

All I have was ever yours.  
Your love flows through me,  
Like the air.

All I ask is to receive you fully,  
To enjoy your gifts,  
And be aware.

## Now Forty

Yesterday, a child  
Chased swamp frogs,  
Swung from a ragged rope  
Beneath an old poplar tree,  
Stole apples, caught grasshoppers,  
Ran from lightning, and June bugs!  
Gaining strength from his Father's voice  
And worth from his Mother's eyes.

Yesterday, a boy  
Leapt from tree to tree,  
Fought battles with sticks and cattails,  
Rode his bicycle down steep hillsides,  
Sat atop an old station-wagon at the drive-in,  
And fished with a cane pole and bobber!  
Winning approval from his Elder Brother,  
And the smile from his Uncle's face.

Yesterday, a young man  
Set his mind upon the path of learning,  
Played football, ran track,  
Wrote songs and stories,  
Learned what fingers, lips, and tongues were for,  
And what girls keep beneath their clothes!  
Feeling the warmth of her body,  
And the shelter of her smile.

Yesterday, a man  
Traveled the world,  
Sought adventure, found a wife,  
Started a family, bought a house,  
Built a career, created a company.  
And had a brief conversation with God!  
Learning love from family and friends,  
And Truth from Disaster.  
Incredibly, we are forty now!

# Puddles

Look there, at that spot of water.  
Wasn't there an hour ago.  
A shining pool, the rainman's daughter.  
Into the mirror, the raindrops go.

Brown or silver, clear or muddled.  
Born to give the clouds a face.  
Not an ocean, just a puddle,  
Water always finds its place.

People barely see the beauty,  
Just enough to step around.  
Thinking always of their duty,  
Never mind what's on the ground.

Gabe and I put on galoshes,  
We know how to stomp and splash.  
Seeking out the holes and washes  
Sailing cardboard, sticks, and trash.

Dirt and water mix together  
Just a moment, then it's gone.  
Earth and sky, in rainy weather  
Meet each other, then move on.

Autumn kisses, hugs and cuddles.  
Winter snow, good friends and cheer.

Spring is a parade of puddles!  
Splash and play 'till Summer's here.

# Sing Your Song

Warrior, sing your song!  
The world is dying.  
Your sister is crying  
To hear you.

Warrior, dance your dance!  
The snake is lying.  
Your brother is trying  
To join you.

Warrior, speak your truth!  
The wind blows cold  
The young and old  
Don't know you.

Warrior, take your stand!  
Without a choice  
There is no voice  
To help you

Warrior, fight your fight!  
We've closed our eyes  
And lived on lies  
To hide from you

Warrior, dream your dream!  
We have a chance

To break the trance  
And dream too.

# Snow On The Mountain

The leaves on the trees,  
Are burning bright.  
The leaves in the air are falling.  
The leaves on the ground,  
Blow left and right.  
The voice of the wind is calling.

The clouds in the sky,  
Are stretched and torn.  
The clouds in the sky are few.  
The clouds in the sky,  
Since the day I was born,  
Make me wonder what to do.

The snow on the mountain,  
Is etched in white.  
The snow on the mountain lies still.  
The snow on the mountain,  
Come springtime might  
The streams and rivers fill.

The trees in the valley  
Are strong and old.  
The trees in the valley grow tall.  
The trees in the valley  
Know stories, I'm told,  
Of past deeds great and small.

The light in the evening  
Is a soft, golden sight.  
The light in the evening is nigh.  
The light in the evening  
Will fade into night.  
The night, the light, and I.

# The Flower On Your Kimono

When you were born  
You were given  
A beautiful kimono.  
Softer than a rabbit's tail,  
Lightly colored as the morning sky.

When first I met you  
I had never seen  
Your beautiful kimono.  
Lost in your eyes  
I followed the river of your hair,  
Into the hills and valleys of your body.

I kissed your cheek  
You kissed my mouth  
And unwrapped your beautiful kimono.  
Slowly, I became a hummingbird  
Plunging deep within the flower  
Taking all the hidden nectar.

Rising the next morning  
I thought of the flower  
On your beautiful kimono  
The lovely scent  
The pale dawn light  
I would remember, always.

# The Road Will Bring You Home

Love, it's been a dozen seasons  
Must I wait a dozen more?  
And I've yet to know the reasons  
Keeping you from my door.

Well the road took you a' roamin'  
And the road took you away.  
But, the road will bring you home, and  
It's with me you will stay.

Now with every red sun's risin'  
And the falling of the tide.  
My eyes look to the horizon  
Wanting you by my side.

Well the road took you a' roamin'  
And the road took you away.  
But, the road will bring you home, and  
It's with me you will stay.

You and I will have a baby  
And he'll grow up strong and free.  
Or a fair and lovely lady  
If a daughter she be.

Well the road took you a' roamin'  
And the road took you away.

But, the road will bring you home, and  
It's with me you will stay.

Well the road took you a' roamin'  
And the road took you away.  
But, the road will bring you home, and  
It's with me you will stay.

## Wai Ching

Sunlight, south window shine  
Slaps my unwary eyes  
Still fresh from sleep.

Arms and legs blend with mine  
So quietly she lies,  
No promises to keep.

We merge and break in time.  
Smiles need no reason,  
Saying more than we can speak.

To love in pantomime  
Living in the proper season  
Sacrificing as we seek.

# When I Was Very Young

When the world was new,  
And stories were few,  
And I was very young,  
I rode the breeze,  
Above the trees,  
With fire upon my tongue!

My skin was red,  
From toe to head,  
My mind was full of wonder.  
A dragon's tail,  
Translucent scales,  
And treasure ships to plunder.

My wings grew strong,  
Before too long,  
Beneath a watchful eye.  
Grandfather knew,  
What wings could do,  
When falling through the sky.

From above the town,  
I'd come screaming down,  
And carry off a meal.  
Jewels old,  
Or chests of gold,  
I'd take what I could steal.

And when it all  
Became too small,  
I transited on treasure.  
Without a trace,  
Through time and space,  
To other stories without measure.

Trouble brought,  
Or so I thought,  
No foe I couldn't master.  
My claws were fast,  
As he ran past,  
But the Blue Knight's sword was faster.

Now here I lie,  
Perhaps to die,  
By pride and greed undone.  
But I'll laugh yet,  
And not forget,  
When I was very young.

Struggle

## Betting On Tomorrow

What do you want?  
What do you need?  
Where are you going?  
Where will it lead?

How did you get here?  
How do you feel?  
Why not be honest?  
Why not be real?

How much is science?  
How much is art?  
When does it all end?  
When do you start?

Who will you fight for?  
Who will you love?  
Which one is below you?  
Which is above?

What happens tomorrow?  
What happens today?  
How many hours wasted?  
How many delays?

Who cares for you, anyway?  
What scares you, my friend?

Why wait any longer?  
If not now, when?

## Blue On Blue

Staring at the street outside my window,  
Watching the morning come along.  
Sometimes I'm not sure of what I'm doin'.  
Sometimes it's a strain, and not a song.

Red is the color of the morning.  
Green are the hills that I once knew.  
Wrong and right, are written black and white,  
But all I see's the color blue on blue.

The supermarket saves me more than Jesus.  
The Buddha's not around to set me straight.  
Jehovah throws me something when he pleases.  
And Krishna's on the corner with my fate.

Red is the color of the morning.  
Green are the hills that I once knew.  
Wrong and right, are written black and white,  
But I can't see the color blue on blue.

I'd like to be somewhere without this pavement.  
I'd like to see a sky without these wires.  
I'd like to meet a heart without engravement.  
I'd like to speak with friends instead of liars.

Red is the color of the morning,  
Green are the hills that I once knew.  
Wrong and right, are written black and white,  
But I just see the color blue on blue.

## Concentration 44

Concentration  
Confrontation  
Consternation  
Constellation

Constitution  
Prosecution  
Persecution  
Dissolution

Disproportion  
Oil consortium  
Fact contortion  
True distortion

Troubadouring  
Teenage whoring  
Love is boring  
Laugh ignoring

Life aborting  
False reporting  
Ethnic sorting  
Teleporting

Television  
Mass derision

Competition  
Apparition

Apprehension  
Racial tension  
Did I mention?  
Pay attention!

Pagan gnosis  
Scoliosis  
Halitosis  
Quite atrocious

Quitting smoking  
Thought provoking  
Health promoting  
No one's voting

No solution  
Evolution  
Air pollution  
Revolution

Revelation  
Meditation  
Soul's salvation  
Concentration

## Desperate Logic

Don't know what to say or do,  
All choices look the same.  
I tell myself it isn't true,  
But this is not a game.  
How to light a little hope,  
When you haven't got a flame.  
Desperate logic is to blame.

It seems like such a long time, now,  
Since things have gone my way.  
Sometimes I should win, somehow,  
Or just not have to play.  
Those who cannot stand, must bow,  
And take it day by day.  
Desperate logic must obey.

Lost behind a drywall curtain  
Hushed behind a cable curse.  
Mostly, life's a stillborn burden,  
And sometimes it's much worse.  
Those who pay for others sins,  
Are seldom reimbursed.  
Desperate logic as rehearsed.

Maybe soon I'll get a break,  
The sun will shine on me.  
Those who win are those who take.

All I want is to be free.  
I'll take up sides, against myself,  
And share the victory.  
Desperate logic, killing spree.

Take a drink, or take a pill,  
Join in the attack.  
Eat or sleep until I'm ill,  
Look, but don't look back.  
Slowly wear away, until,  
There's nothing left to whack.  
Desperate logic, no more lack.

# Evolution 44

Evolution  
Dissolution  
Disappearing  
Doubting, fearing

Double faulting  
Mind assaulting  
Latest fashion  
False compassion

Cash inflation  
Dying nation  
Forced eviction  
Science fiction!

Rule infraction  
Losing traction  
Missing junction  
Proper function

Chad adherence  
Disappearance  
Thought transference  
Psychic currents

Raw endurance  
Life insurance

Stern insistence  
Go the distance

Divination  
Confiscation  
Conscious schism  
Communism

Common action  
Satisfaction  
Statistician  
Shrewd magician

Starting over  
Four-leaf clover  
Undercover  
Secret lover

Sacred lever  
Scarlet fever  
Factory shutter  
Distant flutter

Distillation  
Destination  
Destitution  
Evolution

# Give And Take

Please  
Don't give me  
Anything more.  
I'm bent beneath the load  
Of morals, rules, and common sense.  
You've given me enough.

Please  
Don't take away  
Anything more.  
I'm fighting to hold on  
To dignity and self-control.  
You've taken more than you needed.

Please  
Show me  
So much more.  
I see what you want me to see  
Of Spirit, Mind, and Body.  
You've been hiding far too long.

Please  
Listen to me  
My words, and more.  
I've been speaking plainly  
My feelings, thoughts, and observations.  
You've been everywhere but here.

Please  
Be here now,  
Just that, and nothing more.  
Tell me your story.  
Ask me who I am.  
We are all we have.

# Hit The Wall

Hit it. Hit it. Hit the wall.

Hit it, one more time.

The door is locked, the way is blocked,  
It's far too high to climb.  
To work so hard for no return  
Would surely be a crime.

Remember back, if still you can  
Before you hit the wall.

Before your bones were turned to stone,  
When you were very small.  
When everything you had was free,  
And being free was all.

Hit it. Hit it. Hit the wall.

Hit it, one more time.

The door is locked, the way is blocked,  
It's far too high to climb.  
To work so hard for no return  
Would really be a crime.

Not so many years ago

The hard work made you smile.

Your back was straight, you laughed at fate,  
You walked with grace and style.  
You knew for sure your hopes and dreams  
Would come true in a while.

You tried, you lied, you almost died!  
You took what you were fed.  
Your questions went unanswered,  
While your heart filled up with dread.  
The path appeared beneath your feet,  
So you followed where it led.

Hit it. Hit it. Hit the wall.  
Hit it, one more time.  
The door is locked, the way is blocked,  
It's far too high to climb.  
To work so hard for no return  
Would truly be a crime.

And only now, when you've arrived,  
There's nowhere left to go.  
You didn't merely win, you thrived!  
You have so much to show.  
So few up here are left alive  
And none left down below.

## I Am

I am a Liberal.  
I'd rather feed and shelter the poor,  
Than jail them for stealing.  
Let them eat, drink, and smoke  
Whatever they choose.  
I am a Liberal.

I am a Pacifist.  
I don't have the right or will,  
To kill those who oppose me.  
Or make preemptive war,  
Because I fear what they might do.  
I am a Pacifist.

I am a Heretic.  
Jesus loves me, I don't know,  
Though the Bible tells me so.  
I'll not condemn to hellfire and torment  
Those who follow another Way.  
I am a Heretic.

I am a Redneck.  
I think guns are fun, and good  
For hunting, sport, and fighting.  
I'd rather trust my neighbor,  
Than have to trust the State.  
I am a Redneck.

I am a Polysexual!  
I think it's fine, for each to decide,  
Who they are attracted to.  
And to marry, if they wish,  
The one they love the most.  
I am a Polysexual!

I am a Patriot.  
'Cause I love my home,  
My family and my neighbors.  
I won't betray my country,  
With fear, or violence, or bigotry.  
I am a Patriot.

I am a human being.  
I love this world I live in,  
And I'm grateful for the gift.  
I'll face what comes with courage,  
With love, and patience, always.  
I am a human being.

# Killer

One who kills is a Killer.  
With killing comes a price.

A Survivor kills to save himself.  
A Hero to save others.  
A Patriot kills to save his country.  
Although all men are brothers.

A Hunter only kills for food.  
A Mercenary kills for treasure.  
A Fanatic kills for love of God.  
And a Madman kills for pleasure.

A Coward kills from fear, of course.  
A Bigot kills from hate.  
An Idiot kills from ignorance.  
A purely human trait.

A King kills those who disagree.  
A Pope kills those who question.  
A Governor kills murderers.  
But I have a suggestion.

It isn't men that need to die.  
But the violence within them.  
To kill someone, but not know why.  
Is just a fool's anthem.

To live without community  
To love without a face  
To murder with impunity  
The bloody human race.

One who kills is a Killer.  
With killing comes a price.

## Little One

When I first heard of you,  
My heart sank, down into the depths.  
Would you take my life from me?  
Floating there, in the darkness,  
Did you awaken?  
I never saw you.

Back and forth and back and forth,  
We tried to choose whether you'd live or die.  
How to continue, after killing our own?  
Twisting and turning about, wet and slippery,  
Did you turn to me?  
I never felt you.

I had been strong, and honorable.  
I had protected and provided for my children.  
Now, who would protect you, my little one?  
As time ran short, as I made my choice,  
Did you call to me?  
I never heard you.

We drove slowly to the hospital that day,  
Going to take life rather than to give it.  
Why were we doing this, must this be?  
As your world collapsed,  
As your heart stopped beating,  
As your small and beautiful and delicate body was torn asunder,

As all the warm summers and snowy winters were cancelled,  
As childhood, adulthood, and old age were taken away,  
Did you know life, and death?  
I never knew you.

# Military Intelligence

We see they're not like us,  
And we all know what that means.  
We might get gassed with poison  
Or be blown to smithereens  
We don't know what to fear.  
So we'd better fear the worst.  
It's an issue of security  
To meet our need for surety.  
We're better off to kill them, first.

We know better than to trust them,  
They've cheated us before.  
We don't know what they're up to  
But at least we know the score.  
It hurt so much, the last time.  
For years we cried and cursed.  
We don't know what they're doing  
But suspicious thoughts are brewing.  
We're better off to cheat them, first.

By God, we are the good guys  
Protectors of the right.  
Against those evil terrorists,  
We must fight with all our might  
We have to keep a wary eye  
On those in sin immersed.  
They're plotting and they're scheming

Something terrible, we're dreaming  
We're better off to catch them, first.

We need a lot more weapons  
More soldiers and more schemes!  
We need more secret agencies  
To control their thoughts and dreams!  
More spies, and lies, and satellites  
And battle plans rehearsed.  
Eventually we'll see.  
It takes courage to be free.  
We're going to have to love them, first.

## Nicki Green

The bells are ringing for Nicki Green.  
Outside Bodega Bay,  
In a field of grass.

Taken from them early, on a trip to Italy.  
A mother, a father, a son,  
And a thief, who took  
What could not be replaced.

The bells are ringing, for Nicki Green.  
Clanging in the air,  
In the wind by the sea.

When the doctors said, he could not be saved,  
His parents offered his body,  
To seven strangers,  
Who needed what he could no longer use.

The bells are ringing for Nicki Green.  
Gifts from the grateful,  
Who received love instead of hate.

I stood weeping, amid memorials and toys.  
One bell, hung silent in the wind.  
I jumped high,  
Stretched out my hand,  
And rang the bell for Nicki Green.

# Right

I am right, and you are wrong.  
The same old words  
In the same old song.  
I'll prove it to you  
Before too long.

I'm so beautiful, can't you see?  
You must be blind  
To not see me.  
A precious gem  
In a pile of debris.

Call it hubris, call it pride  
Such greatness shouldn't  
Be denied.  
I owe it to you  
Not to hide.

Sure I have my faults, of course!  
Mine are bad,  
But yours are worse!  
To know so much  
Can be a curse!

All I want is for you to know.  
My wisdom like  
A river flows.

Hold me high  
And bow down low.

That you don't love me is your mistake.

Your ignorance  
Is hard to take.

Alone in a world  
I didn't make.

But...

I am right, and you are wrong.

The same old words  
In the same old song.

I'll prove it to you  
Before too long.

# Running In The Rain

Where did you go?  
Running in the rain.  
Suicidal panic,  
Nearly blind with pain.  
Agony and overload  
Again, and again, and again.

What did you see?  
Lost in clouds of grey.  
Desperately seeking to be free,  
But not finding your way.  
Nothing left to think or feel,  
And nothing left to say.

How did you feel?  
When feeling went awry.  
A pendulum of want, not want,  
Unable to know why.  
Too confused to win or lose,  
And much too tired to try.

What did they tell you?  
The friends who meant you well.  
The family watching helplessly,  
As you cried to them from Hell.  
The doctors talked and listened,  
But only you could tell.

What did you do?  
When the sky came crashing down.  
Dragons gashed and slashed and thrashed,  
And beat you to the ground.  
A knife was held against your throat,  
But you couldn't make a sound.

When did it end?  
When you knew you'd had enough.  
You had to choose, and choose for good,  
Why shouldn't life be rough?  
You learned to walk between the lines,  
The easy and the tough.

# The Dump

There were throngs of seagulls,  
Circling the mounds.  
Piles of dirt and furniture,  
Simulated wood-grain veneer and scarred upholstery.  
Dead appliances, dead mattresses,  
And dead dreams in dead packages.

The sweet smell of freshly turned earth.  
The stench of rancid butter and potato peels.  
Meat balls and rotting fruit,  
The residue of ice-cream cartons,  
And used paper diapers,  
Stewing in the sun.

I had to pay forty dollars to throw my stuff away.  
A clump at the foot of a mountain.  
Mud mixed with ooze, and stuck  
To the bottom of my Birkenstocks.  
The discarded items stared back at me.  
I couldn't wait to get out of there.

Out there, beside the bay,  
Beyond the houses and restaurants.  
The banks rise higher, the grass grows green.  
A favorable wind blows,  
And we forget about it all,  
For a while.

But the plastic two-liter bottles,  
And the foil-lined TV dinner trays,  
Wait resolutely, beside the second-class citizens,  
The immigrants and high-school dropouts,  
The old, the poor, and the terminally incompetent,  
The refuse of our civilization.

When we've finished with a thing,  
We say we no longer need it, or have no use for it.  
What becomes of this world,  
When there is no "elsewhere" left to put things.  
And the children of neglect,  
Greet us in the morning, face to face?

# The Man Behind The Curtain

Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.  
Jesus will save you if you just believe.  
You think the news is true, but you can't be certain.  
You should be happy with what you receive.

People need laws or they'd all go crazy.  
No one ever said that the world was fair.  
Those who are poor are just plain lazy.  
It's dog eat dog, so get your share.

Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.  
Jesus will save you if you just believe.  
You think the news is true, but you can't be certain.  
You should be happy with what you receive.

Sex is something that you must respond to.  
You can be successful if you work very hard.  
Changing society is simply beyond you.  
You can't find treasure in your own backyard.

Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.  
Jesus will save you if you just believe.  
You think the news is true, but you can't be certain.  
You should be happy with what you receive.

We have to go to war to protect Democracy.  
We have to build prisons if we want to be free.

We have to threaten people to insure their security.  
We have to hide the ugly parts so others won't see.

Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.  
Jesus will save you if you just believe.  
You think the news is true, but you can't be certain.  
You should be happy with what you receive.

## Without A Net

Here I am, another day,  
Awake, and drenched with sweat.  
Trying hard to stay alive,  
Unable to forget.  
Up again upon the wire,  
To walk without a net.

I've given up my hopes and dreams,  
And struggling to break free,  
To keep us all together,  
And preserve the family.  
I try to keep to here and now,  
But I wonder what will be.

It used to be an easy thing,  
To find another spot.  
Employer's all made offers,  
When I was young and hot.  
Now some of them get back to me,  
But most of them do not.

Now it's only college grads  
They bring into their tents.  
Or hordes of "offshore" engineers,  
To me, it makes no sense.  
To emphasize cheap labor, but  
Ignore experience.

So here I am, applying,  
For jobs I cannot get.  
Someday I'll find an answer,  
But I haven't found it yet.  
Up again upon the wire,  
To walk without a net.



Wisdom

# Better Than the Wind

I never heard a word  
That was better than the wind.  
Nor heard a song more soothing than the sea.

I never saw a picture  
More fantastic than a face.  
And no one but my soul will set me free.

I never saw a movie  
That moved me like a mountain.  
Nor heard a tune that silence couldn't beat.

I never saw a sculpture  
To compete with the Grand Canyon.  
And only a true rose can smell as sweet.

I never found a better beat  
Than heartbeat.  
Nor walked a street that led me very far.  
No sexy model hotter  
Than the bottom of a desert.  
No celebrity that shone brighter than a star.

We seek the thrill  
Of things that are outside us.  
And shout about the magic that we've made.  
We work our lives away  
For just one moment.  
Then sit around and watch the memory fade.

Begin to live the life

That you've been given.  
And take a look, at all there is to see.  
Experience everything  
That's under heaven.  
Return again, to what it is to Be.

# Fasting

Now.

Don't think, for a second.  
For a minute, no breath.  
Don't move for an hour.  
Starve distraction to death.

For a day, don't say anything.  
Don't eat, for a week.  
Don't lie, for a fortnight.  
If you have to, don't speak!

For one month, go nowhere.  
For one year, don't drink.  
Love one soul, for a lifetime.  
It's not what you think.  
Keep a promise forever.  
Keep a house for a year.  
For a month, just do one thing.  
For your friend, shed a tear.

For a week, sing the same song.  
For a day, be a friend.  
For an hour, just listen.  
Let arguments end.

For a minute, watch sunrise.

And see the world turn.  
Think one thought, for a second.  
There's something to learn.

Now.

# God Willing

God is not your father.  
Your father loves you  
If you do what you're told.  
God loves you now.

God is not your mother.  
Your mother wants you  
To be a nice person.  
God wants you to be.

God is not your brother.  
Your brother gives you  
What he can spare.  
God gives what you ask for.

God is not your sister.  
Your sister hears your problems  
Offering sympathy and comfort.  
God hears you.

God is not your master.  
Your master tells you  
What to do.  
God tells you to choose.

God is not your slave.  
Your slave must serve

Whatever purpose you desire.  
God is free.

God is not what you think.  
What you think  
Is merely a rumor.  
God just is.

# Have You Seen The Rainbow

Have you seen the rainbow,  
At the edges of the rain?  
Have you felt the cold, clear river  
Running through the pain?

Have you caught the full moon  
Breaking through a cloud?  
Have you found the courage  
To speak your thoughts out loud?

Have you stood amid the storm  
And watched the lightning fly?  
Have you risen from the dirt  
And held your head up high?

Have you tracked the circling stars  
And finally found your way?  
Have you watched the sun come up  
And had nothing to say?

Have you trudged a long, steep path  
And walked it to the end?  
Have you sung and danced all night  
To awake among your friends?

Have you seen the rainbow?

# Heartless

Water falls as water lifts,  
And raindrops turn to dew.  
The wind plays safely on the cliffs.  
And each day breaks anew.  
A songbird fails against the glass.  
The sunlight shines right through.  
Whatever comes will surely pass.  
Don't bite what you can't chew.

The road goes on, it never ends.  
It leads nowhere at all.  
The heart that's bitter never mends.  
Just get up when you fall.  
The world itself, without a heart  
Is just a muddy ball.  
To win the gold, but lose your friends,  
Will make your heart grow small.

Make a list of all your gifts,  
Or better still, make two.  
First what you have done for them,  
Then what they've done for you.  
Count the lines, just take a look,  
It happens to be true.  
You surely got more than you gave.  
But then again, you knew.

# Mind Matter

You said it didn't matter.  
It was just your Mind.

Your eyes may trick you.  
Will you never open them?  
Your feet may fail you.  
Will you never take a step?  
Your heart has hurt you.  
Will you now just turn away?

Your very soul  
Houses both Good and Evil.  
Will you close the doors, and shun the light?

The Great  
Is the enemy of the good.  
The Best  
Is the enemy of the beautiful.

Use what you have.  
Do what you can.  
Begin here, now, with what is before you.

It all matters.

## Say Yes

The Universe says "Yes".  
We worry all our lives.  
Lost among our occupations.  
Good husbands fear their wives.  
Careful thought and plans, I guess.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
Before we act, we think.  
We want to know the consequence,  
While standing on the brink.  
We should know better than the rest.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
We want a guarantee!  
We're dying for a difference.  
We're safe, but we're not free.  
Risk and benefits are assessed.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
Why not take a chance?  
Chase the one you really want.  
Ask the girl to dance!  
The world begins outside the nest.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
What is there to lose?  
Where you are is where you'll be.  
Without the will to choose.  
You may get more, you may get less.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
Time is running out.  
You may get seventy years or so,  
To discover what your life's about!  
You are the cause of your distress.  
The Universe says "Yes".

The Universe says "Yes".  
You can either walk or run.  
Along with all you have to do  
Remember to have fun.  
A heart still beats inside your chest.  
The Universe says "Yes".

# The Terran Code

War Does Not Bring Peace  
Peace Comes Through Cooperation  
Cooperation Requires Agreement  
Agreement Follows Honor  
Honor Gives As It Takes  
Taking And Giving Shows Responsibility  
Responsibility Rests In Individuals  
Individuals Act With Reason  
Reason Ignored Leads To War

# The Rules

Limitation is the price of existence.  
Winning is balanced by what is lost.  
There is no force without resistance.  
Time is a measure of distance crossed.

Fairness isn't the same as Beauty.  
Love is more than the lack of Hate.  
Honor can't be reduced to Duty.  
Life isn't measured by its rate.

To know the Dance, become a dancer.  
God is everywhere you look.  
"I don't know" is a very good answer.  
The Truth can be found, but not in a book.

What is real is not theoretical.  
The meaning of life isn't on a list.  
To question authority is not heretical.  
To kiss someone, you must be kissed.

The nature of self is in the other.  
Matter is energy in an orderly phase.  
The stars are everybody's Mother.  
Things occur in many ways.

The world is not contained by reason.  
Ignorance is the greatest lie.

To everything there is a season.  
You'll never know until you try.

# The Sun Does Not Rise

The sun does not rise,  
It's just the earth turning.  
We reach for the prize  
While the house is burning.

The moon does not shine  
It's just a reflection.  
We rely on facts  
Of our own selection.

Love does not last  
Nor promises spoken.  
Feelings change fast,  
And hearts will be broken.

Life is for living  
Not saving or holding.  
Taking and giving  
Forever unfolding.

War can't be won  
By people or nation  
A gun can't be used  
As a tool of creation.

Peace is a moment  
A pause in a fight.

To be taken away  
By a thief in the night.

The past will not stay  
And the future won't come  
What is yours today  
Will memory become.

Abide in the Now  
Though it be an illusion  
Your heart will allow  
For the mind's confusion.

# The Way Home

You tell me that you've lost your way.  
You can't go home again, they say.  
We who live must die someday,  
And move on empty-handed.

Your heart and soul are tired, it's true,  
Of all the things you thought you knew.  
But what you are, is what you do,  
And not just where you've landed.

You carry what you cannot see,  
What you were and yet may be.  
Your home is not beneath a tree,  
Nor hidden in the past.

It's been there with you all along,  
You thought it lost, but you were wrong.  
The only place where you belong  
Will welcome you at last.

Not far below nor high above  
The sacred place I'm speaking of.  
Looking through the eyes of love,  
Your home is with you, still.

Everyone you've ever known,  
And everything that life has shown

Is yours to keep, but not to own  
To visit if you will.

# Unleashed

Be wild, not untrained, but unleashed.

Be true, not certain, but sure.

Be alive, until life has ceased.

Be free, not perfect, but pure.

Don't try to prove the unknown.

Don't try to force love, or earn grace.

Don't try to hold back what has flown.

Don't try to hide faults to save face.

Why take what somebody told you?

Why spend your life as a tool?

Why let perfect strangers control you?

Why learn to be somebody's fool?

No one can tell you the answer.

No rules, no safety, no fear.

No cares, just a reckless romancer.

No walls, no worries, no tears.

Inside your pain, there's a book.

Inside your mind, there's a key.

Inside the bait, there's a hook.

Inside the acorn, a tree.

# The End

I loved to run downhill, as a pup,  
As fast as I could,  
As fast as I could.

Until my feet could not keep up.  
I thought I might stumble, or fly!

I loved to dive into lake or pool,  
As deep as I could,  
As deep as I could.  
Until all about me was dark and cool.  
I'd reach the bottom, or die!

I loved to read on Grandpa's porch  
As much as I could,  
As much as I could.  
Page after page 'till my eyes were scorched  
I'd read to the end, or go blind!

I loved to ask questions on Uncle's knee,  
As hard as I could,  
As hard as I could.  
Until things might finally make sense to me,  
I'd catch the Truth, in my mind!

I never feared for my very last breath,  
As though I should,  
As though I should.

Until my eyes saw approaching death.  
I thought I'd see something new.

I never hoped to merit glory,  
As if I could,  
As if I could  
Until I'd finished telling the story,  
Enough, for me and you.

# 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.