





# Rocket Fuel for Dreamers

Poems by Jordan Chaney

Edited by Joslyn Hamilton

## **ROCKET FUEL FOR DREAMERS**

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*To my son David,  
this is me, fighting the bears...*

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If I am forgetting anyone at all I promise to add your name to future reprints of this book!

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## FOREWORD

For any writer, poetry is the most frightening of all the arts. To do it right requires bravery and a willingness to run naked in public. Polite poetry, clothed in acceptable thoughts and must-not-offend words, can sometimes be beautiful, whimsical or funny but is seldom worth a second read or more than a moment's consideration. Good poetry is scalding and wild and exposes the soul of the poet so it can better speak to our own.

A few years ago, when the master of ceremonies at our local writer's conference introduced Jordan Chaney and told us that he would read some of his poetry, I have to confess I wasn't expecting much. I may not be able to write it, but I love poetry traditional and modern--and I know good stuff when I hear it. I also know how rare it is.

That day I glanced at the clock, settled in, and prepared to clap when it was over. But even in my pessimistic funk, I noticed something, some energy in the air. Many of the others in the crowd were hunched in their seats with carefully polite expressions. But there were a few

people who shifted forward, their faces bright with anticipation. Maybe they were friends, I remember thinking, but the eagerness was too honest for obligation.

So I had a little warning when the poet began to speak.

Poetry is meant to be read aloud. Only when voiced does it reveal the full experience of rhythm and word. I felt like someone who had sat down to watch first graders tap-dance and Mikhail Baryshnikov <sup>1</sup> had taken the stage instead.

Jordan Chaney knows how to use words, how to play deftly with meanings, sounds and rhythm. But his poetry, like powerful art everywhere, surpasses mere skill: it is raw, huge, hopeful and naked.

Enjoy,

Patricia Briggs

---

<sup>1</sup> Mikhail Baryshnikov “Misha” is a Russian American dancer, choreographer and actor. He is known as one of the greatest ballet dancers in history.

## FOR HARD TIMES

the woman  
who is missing an arm

and has a fly on her breast  
that her daughter

who is missing a lip  
is nursing from . . .

is  
laughing

-Orion Baker, March/2006

\*This poem is a snapshot of a moment my good friend Orion encountered while visiting a village near the Sobat River in Upper Nile State, Southern Sudan.

## NOTE TO THE DREAMER

at first  
you kinda sorta gotta lie A LOT  
you know, make it up  
you kinda sorta gotta REALLY  
disagree with the way  
everything is now

get fed up

you really gotta let go and be free...  
because somewhere  
at some point  
for some reason  
you might've gave up and gave in

and we're here to fix that  
we're here to fix that and each other

– Jordan

## TIME MACHINE

Cause I can see it now...  
Way out in the far reaches of my finite  
life; sixty or so years from today.  
Where the baby I once was has come  
to know its own wrinkles once again.  
When cars hover and everything is all  
shiny, white and smooth.  
When what hair I would have is as  
silver as space suits.  
When my joints ache and my bones  
squeak. I'm gonna have an ugly green  
sweater with holes in it,  
it's gonna be my favorite one too,  
the one that I wear on lazy Sunday  
afternoons, catching siestas in a  
rocking chair on a large porch  
somewhere out there  
cozily being lulled  
to sleep by my own  
last breaths...

That day will come.

So today I pretend.  
I act as if I was given  
a second chance to live.  
That I traveled back from  
that moment, to right here  
and now, to do it all  
over again.

## LOVE POEM

if you let it  
love will move you  
it can dance under the  
strobe light of your halo  
even if you can't dance

it can enter you  
it can mimic water  
and seep into every  
crack of your being  
and quench you

it can cut away the strings

your heart can float  
on it like a tiny sailboat  
and gently sway on  
the waves it creates  
and never get lost at sea

with your permission  
it can create you

it can reach you  
it can heal you

I have witnessed it  
with my own foresight  
it can tsunami all  
of your tears away

all at once for all of forever  
I promise you  
so I say go forth  
and let it

because once inside  
it can scrub the soul  
completely clean and wash  
over the unfinished sand castle  
of your dreams giving you  
the freedom to rebuild

again

it can rebuild you

and grant you the time to become  
whatever it is you wish to become

it has a nourishing quality  
it can feed you  
it can pour gravy all  
over your biscuits  
and then some

it can remind you  
it can find you

it can rescue you when  
you're stranded on the desolate  
island of your own heart  
you and your volleyball named Wilson

it says that if you open your soul to me  
I will open all of my doors for you

and that's what I want

like a game show  
I want what's behind  
all of her doors  
I'll take anything  
from a silly \$10 blender

to the secrets of the universe

I'll take the giddiness of a first kiss  
for the rest of my life  
over all of the glitz and splendor  
of a winning lottery ticket

so if for any reason at all  
you have given up  
on yourself  
on a relative  
on your goals  
your ambitions  
your childhood fantasies  
on biscuits  
on love in any of her  
endlessly beautiful  
shapes and forms

I encourage you to strike a match

and light the bonfire once more  
and send your smoke signals into the  
heavens and watch in wonderment  
as life becomes  
a ball of clay in your palm

because if everything anybody  
has ever told you about life  
is completely wrong

your only hell will be memories  
you wished you could've lived  
or people you could've loved

so love yourself  
and nourish your talents  
love your neighbors  
no matter what  
language they speak  
and give all of your pocket change  
to all of the people who need it most  
because it's the most important thing

see if it means  
finding the truth to love to life  
I'll search the skies  
far and wide, I'll hike the  
pyramids or mountains of Mars  
in search of a bright dandelion for her

love has been a lamp unto my sandals  
it has kept me afloat

and like an old rusted boat anchor  
I have this sinking feeling  
deep down in my bowels  
that when you're drowning

love is keeping your  
lungs inflated and your lungs are  
keeping your body floating  
and to keep the lava flowing  
to keep your visions in flight  
and find that love is the only  
love of your life

all that's required of you  
your only responsibility  
is to love

## **ROCKET FUEL FOR DREAMERS**

open as wide as you wish  
the furnace of your heart,  
of your passion,

and shovel in piles of coal,  
take the firewood of your visions,  
of your dreams and throw them in,  
stoke it with meditation and focus,

and at last drench your heart's wildest  
desires with rocket fuel and ignite the  
reality you truly seek

## FOURTH DIMENSION

if I were to create the fourth  
dimension I would take winter spring  
summer and fall and wrap them  
around my spine so tightly that my  
soul would shoot upward 10x the pull  
of gravity and skate across  
atmospheres skies and suns the size of  
my measureless eyes, you see, the  
fourth dimension is where I lay under  
cherry blossoms and skip moss  
covered thoughts across infinite ponds  
that send ripples through my mind  
and shatter mirrors above the clouds  
staring back at me hands drenched in  
acrylics while oils drip from my spirit  
I am the breath the bridge from life to  
death the in between being that never  
rests whose palms flourish with palm  
trees and ponders upon a sun that  
never sets  
I am...

## A CHILDLIKE WONDER

at night  
I peek into the mirror  
and draw pictures  
of stars and moons  
where my mouth  
and eyes should be  
I call it my  
higher-self-portrait

I imagine  
that my mouth  
is a mountain  
and that passion  
pours out like lava  
my shoulders  
are the horizon line  
my aura the sunrise  
rising behind my head  
spouting out  
like fountain spray  
ya see, daydreaming  
takes the mist  
out of the mystery

at night  
I leave my body  
I fly my spirit  
like Benjamin's kite  
like a child full of wonder  
lost in a storm

where I become  
every folklore & metaphor

and I drift

I am childish  
my wish is the same wish  
that I have always wished

and that's to lift  
a mountain of sand  
with puckered fists  
pucker my lips  
and blow this world a kiss  
while its head is hung low  
wading in the wattage  
and constant glow  
of the evening news in hopes  
that it will all one day shift  
from a great flood  
back into a fine mist  
high above where kids  
play seek & hide  
underneath their eyelids  
far away from violence

miles above crying sirens  
clenching crayons in their fists

at night  
I peek beyond the mirror  
staring back at me

I dream up new worlds  
I color a bright aura  
around my body  
and draw pictures  
of stars and moons  
where my mouth  
and eyes should be

it makes me feel  
closer to home  
when the universe  
smiles through me like this  
because it's home that I miss

I can't imagine a place I'd  
rather be more than now  
than looking down  
on a planet full of lights  
some dimming and waning  
others are wild flames

all of them lit up  
with fire in their gut  
in their pit  
smoke billowing from nostrils  
drooling dragon spit  
a bunch of aimless angels  
idling along their way  
dragging their  
blackened heels  
over hot coals  
it's too hot here

so at night  
my cape licks the wind and  
I fly into other worlds  
that I've created  
leaving a trail of crushed crayons  
and stardust in my midst  
your side of the mirror

my eyes turn lightning white

I moon walk and I rain dance  
I pray and I chant with the gods  
I shape shift and  
move objects with thought  
I levitate with light  
shooting down from my palms  
walking on water  
spitting lava like  
Pele the island goddess

here, I am ten feet tall and  
my talents are super powers  
music is language  
art is greater than nuclear waste  
it's a world I've created  
where being human had met  
its fate and so turned to dust  
hence the mountains we should  
be moving with faith to build  
a better world for all of us

worlds away from

thunder gods and their flames

cause at night  
my cape licks the wind  
and I fly high above  
the ivory clouds  
I time travel lifetimes  
ahead of tribal dreamers far out  
and listen back for their whispers  
and I want them to say  
that I had mystical visions

I want storytellers to sit  
around their village fire  
and speak of me as  
if I were a myth

a feathery gift

for them to say  
that I was great  
a space angel  
a water walker  
from deep space  
that my face was  
moon mouthed and starlit  
the most beautiful constellation  
to come down and visit this place

and fill the world with  
miracles and wonder

at night  
my head hits the pillow  
and scatters into a fine ambiance  
painting the world of my imagination

where my crayons become wands  
where language becomes song  
and I am just child

## EPITOME OF IMPOSSIBLE

back in high school I used to ride the  
city bus home, and on that city bus  
there were posters perfectly placed in  
view with statistics similar to bets on  
what my odds were for escaping  
poverty:

I am the product of a drug addicted  
mother and a fatherless home

a statistical problem

a government-cheese-eating black  
teenage fatherless father with cornrow  
braided hair and a thousand yard  
stare gazing out of another one of  
America's hard-knock projects

I'm dead weight on society

they say that the only way out of this  
slum that I'm in is self-medication  
to numb myself and avoid sobriety

their solution is discourage and to get  
rid of me, the problem

I am the epitome of impossible

I shouldn't be here, the posters on the  
city bus say so, they say that black  
kids my age that have a baby on the  
way will most likely grow up to  
commit crimes and live in poverty,  
they say that I probably won't make it  
to see 25 years old anyway

they're telling me to give up today

these posters created by educated men  
who have never lived where I have  
lived are telling me that I don't have a  
snowball's chance in hell to live the  
way that they live

they say that it's improbable

they're telling me that the odds are  
stacked high against me and that I  
should forget about wishing on a star  
that I'm a hopeless fallen comet that  
hit the earth's atmosphere for  
reaching too far that I'll burst and  
shatter into a bunch of statistical facts  
and figures that don't really even  
matter

they're telling me not to try

they're telling me that poor little black  
kids will create poor little black kids

and abandon those poor little black  
kids and those poor little black kids  
will do the same  
they build “Planned Parenthoods” in  
my hood to prevent this game

it’s violent.  
they say that it’s cyclic that these  
social sciences can measure the course  
of all human behavior — they think  
their kooky little statistics make them  
psychic

my anger is ignited  
the part of me that believes they’re  
right doesn’t know whether to try or  
give up and die

but maybe they don’t have it all  
figured out; maybe their problem  
solving ability is limited to just getting  
rid of the problem rather than to  
introducing new variables like hope  
that could possibly solve them

I’m trying to reason with monsters

the real problem is: their analysis and  
interpretation of observed data of one  
number measured against another  
number in a new unit of time is all

dandy, good and may serve them fine  
but

I'm a true rise in their crooked line  
the epitome of impossible

yeah

I'm a true rise in their crooked line  
because what they couldn't calculate is  
the incredible random power of the  
human soul on fire

they have no idea how to graph a soul  
on ice so now they're scrambling  
trying to box up and chalk up a soul  
that learned how to glow even when  
shrouded in the starkest of nights

impossible

that this poor little black kid could  
spring so many traps and understand  
that his value is much higher than  
what the experts led him to believe

a true rise in their crooked line  
I am the epitome of impossible  
from what they told me I shouldn't be  
here, so one of us is obviously lying  
cause pressure makes diamonds and

I am possible

## THE NINJA TURTLE POEM

once upon a time  
while fighting my way  
out of the gutter  
it dawned on me  
that everything I ever  
needed to know in life  
about being a man I learned  
from Leonardo, Donatello,  
Raphael and Michelangelo.

### The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

I learned basic things  
like just because your skin  
is a different color or  
you come from the gutter  
doesn't mean that you have  
to keep your abilities or  
confidence undercover  
and where you're raised  
or where you're from has  
absolutely nothing to do  
with who you are becoming  
and everything to do with  
the superhuman strength  
that you possess to overcome it  
you've got to overcome it!

and April O'Neil in her  
bright yellow jump suit

taught me that we have  
the power to change  
the evening news, and  
strip it of all its darkness  
and blues, half truths

and whole lies

I also learned that Shredder  
and his cutting cutlery,  
his Foot Clan, his  
Bebops and Rocksteadys  
are hiding everywhere in disguises  
like wolves in sheep's clothing  
with plans to derail your plans  
and slowly pull the wool  
over your eyes so stay wise  
because their traps are plenty

but the most important lesson  
that I learned from 4 mutants  
and a noble Rat is that a real man  
stays in combat and raises  
his children up so that  
they don't go out into the world  
and re-animate the life they  
are so heroically fighting to escape

you don't need guns  
you don't even really need capes  
You just need to fill a few homes with  
fathers

enter Master Splinter my first Mentor

he was everything I never had  
and all that I wanted to be  
he is the only father I knew  
and back then I never realized  
that I was gathering all the truth  
that this animated rat gave me  
what he taught stayed and by 9<sup>th</sup>  
grade...

Splinter came to life and manifested  
as my math teacher, Mr. Chapin. No  
doubt about it he truly cared and  
that's what saved me.

ya see, back in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at  
4 o'clock-Ninja-star sharp  
everyday my imagination  
was completely free to ooze  
underneath dank New York City  
streets on FOX TV. I was a fiend.  
I had everything from the  
T-shirts and action figures to the  
video games and trapper keepers.  
my mother did her best.  
But truth be told trying to raise  
a bunch of teenage mutants on  
your own in a fatherless home  
is a wreck plain and simple

boys need fathers in order

to become men

it's awful when we pretend.  
when we're left to fend for  
ourselves we begin to mimic  
the synthetic polymer over  
polished toys in cheap plastic  
packaging it's far too easy  
for us young bucks  
to get the villains and  
hero's roles mixed up  
and so transform into one  
hell of a bastard.

abandon your child?  
only a shell of a man  
would do something that dastardly!

so if you're in the gutter  
in the sewer fighting  
to make things right  
then do what's right  
and stay in the fight

because the world needs its heroes  
and the children need their fathers  
and now that I'm grown  
with a child of my own

I am giving my son everything!  
everything I ever wanted!

everything I ever needed and never  
had and that's a mutant boy  
that became a deadbeat teenage father  
and then somehow someway  
turned it all around and  
miraculously mutated into a Dad

## CONFLICT

I'd like to propose a toast...

to dreams  
and to the bold  
Men and Women  
that dare to dream them  
to the wild-eyed visionaries  
that plant seeds in their  
hearts with hopes  
to one day see them  
come to pass

for prayers  
sweeter than papayas  
that rise from the  
deepest darkest  
depths of our cellars  
where my heart  
is pumping out  
prayers like mass

to the foresight  
that illuminates our  
foreshadows that  
whirl in the glass  
of our souls  
to those robust  
farm workers clad  
in jeans, flannels  
handkerchiefs and hats

for all the mamas and papas that  
wear their skin like worn leather  
who are wrinkled and red like raisins  
and whose wrinkles hold stories like  
wine jugs and whose woes  
are ten miles deeper than any  
winemaker's pocket book

this one's for them

for all of the grandmas  
and grandpas that look like stucco  
whose eyes look like ice wines  
with frost outlining their irises  
for the crows-feet perched  
perfectly on their eyelids  
and their white hair flowing  
like broken clouds passing  
through windmill slices  
for century old spines like gnarly  
vines in vineyards for lilac diamonds  
to the god-like elders  
for our aging wines and  
their timeless guidance

this one's for floral notes  
sung by the brown folks  
for the flower vendor  
the one that puts  
the rose in rosary  
for a gorgeous culture  
that rose from dirt so openly

for arms that open like blossoms  
for womb-like palms that deliver  
the grape from bondage  
and carry it from  
conception to fruition  
and beyond the goblet  
for the seed that dreams itself  
larger than grapes and transcends  
wine, song, couplet and sonnet

to cherry pickers like  
rebels with barreled chests  
waging war with their wages  
who hurl their dreams  
like Molotov cocktails  
into our amber waves of grain  
whose knuckles are  
gnarled and strained  
for the work of a dreamer  
is stainless and honest

for the protagonist, the antithesis, the  
subplot and most importantly the  
conflict

you see  
I know copper-skinned  
women and men  
that work for pennies

I know mothers that  
never feel beaten

machine-like Mothers  
that clean hotels by day  
sell Avon at night  
and work the fields  
on the weekends  
so this one's for freedom

for children with eyes like plums  
whose hair looks like dark chocolate  
waterfalls pouring out and catching  
the sun

for precious sun-flowers  
with green thumbs that  
have never been embarrassed  
of their hardworking parents  
that pick pears and pluck asparagus  
this one's for the families that get  
scattered for work all across the  
Americas

its ugly  
I know a girl that was  
held for ransom at birth  
just beneath the border  
by bad men known  
as Coyotes who you  
gotta pay to smuggle dreams  
into this country

its beyond ugly  
its heart crushing

so this one's for the underbelly  
for the juggling of children over rivers  
for dodging dogs & militias  
for sliding dreams past  
the law writers passing  
laws higher than the  
barbed wire they're casting  
the people they're pruning  
and the hopes they're smashing

to the Mighty Migrant Worker  
may your hands and spine  
always nurture the vine  
may the cups of all your tomorrows  
be filled with the fruits of your labor  
and may the dreams you  
dream of find freedom  
in the land of your neighbor

to you

## CONFLICTO

Quisiera hacer un brindis...

un brindis por los sueños  
y por los valientes hombres  
y las fuertes mujeres  
que se atrevan a soñarlos.  
Un brindis por los visionarios  
cuyos ojos iluminados  
siembran semillas en sus corazones  
con la esperanza de verlas, algún día,  
llegar a florecer.

Un brindis por los rezos  
más dulces que papayas  
que se levantan de la más onda  
y oscura profundidad  
de nuestra bodega  
donde mi corazón bombea  
los rezos como en la misa.  
Y brindemos por la previsión  
que ilumina nuestro presagio  
que gira en la copa de nuestra alma.

Brindemos por los robustos granjeros  
con sus franelas, vaqueros, pañuelos y  
gorras por las mamás y los papás  
que llevan su piel como cuero gastado  
arrugado y rojo como uvas pasas  
cuyas arrugas guardan historias como  
jarras de vino

cuyas congojas alcanzan diez millas  
más allá de la cartera  
de cualquier vinicultor

Este es por ellos

por todas las Abuelas  
y por todos los Abuelos  
quienes se parecen al estuco  
cuyos ojos son como vinos helados  
con escarcha rodeada en sus iris.

Este es por las patas de gallo  
perfectamente posadas  
y su cabello cano volando  
como nubes pasando  
por las tejadas del molino.

Este es por las columnas  
vertebrales, antiguas y nudosas  
de las parras del viñedo  
como diamantes de lilo  
y viejos sabios  
por nuestro vino añejo  
y su guía eterna

Este es por las notas de Flora  
cantada por la gente morena y  
por la vendedora de rosas  
que echa rosas en el rosario y  
por una cultura hermosa  
que salió de la tierra tan abierta  
Este es por los brazos  
que se abren como flores

por las palmas del vientre  
que salvan a la uva  
de su servidumbre  
y la lleva de su concepción  
al hecho y más allá de la copa  
Este es por la semilla  
que sueña en sí misma  
más allá de las uvas  
y trasciende el vino,  
el canto, la copla y el soneto.  
Este es por Ella.

Este es por los recogedores de cerezas  
rebeldes con pecho de barril  
declarando la guerra contra sus  
sueños quienes lanzan sus sueños  
como cócteles Molotov  
hacia nuestras alas amarillas  
de trigo, cuyos nudillos  
nudosos y cansados  
por el trabajo de un soñador  
inoxidable y sincero por el  
protagonista, el antitesis,  
la trama secundaria y, más  
importante, el conflicto

Ya ves  
Yo conozco a hombres y a mujeres  
de piel de cobre que cobran centimos

Yo conozco a Madres  
que nunca se sienten vencidas

Madres de máquina  
que limpian hoteles de día y  
que venden Avon de noche y  
que labran en el campo en los findes  
este por la libertad

por los Niños con ojos de ciruela  
cuyo cabello es como el chocolate  
como cataratas vertiendo agua  
y atrapando el sol

por los girasoles preciosos  
con manos de jardinero  
que nunca han sentido la vergüenza  
de sus padres obreros  
que recogen las peras  
y que arrancan el espárrago  
este por las familias dispersas por  
toda América en busca de trabajo

Y es feo.

Yo conozco a una chica  
que fue secuestrada del parto  
justo en la frontera  
por hombres malos  
conocidos como Coyotes  
y a quienes se paga  
por contrabandear  
sueños a este país

La fealdad del hecho  
te agrieta el corazón.

Entonces este es por los invisibles  
por el malabarismo de los niños por los  
ríos por el escape de los perros y los  
paramilitares por el tropiezo de los  
sueños por el aprobado del legislado  
cuyas leyes sobrepasan  
el alambre de púas que pasan  
por las personas que podan  
y los sueños que quiebran

Al Poderoso Obrero Migrante  
que tus manos y espinazo  
siempre alimente a la parra,  
que las copas de tu mañana  
estén llenas de las frutas de tu labor  
y que encuentren tus sueños  
la libertad en la tierra de tu vecino.

Este es por ti.

Conflict translated by  
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## FLOWERS FOR MONKS

there are monks  
that believe that  
we've all lived  
enough lifetimes  
within infinity  
to have all been each  
other's mothers

at some point we have all  
nurtured and struggled with  
one another in some form  
or fashion and that we catch  
glimpses of our upbringing  
and past together  
in our very common  
moments of passing  
each other  
by

a dream that seems almost  
unfathomable one that tears  
seams in the sky

that seven fathoms deep in  
meditation we might  
actually discover a golden  
thread lacing our spirits  
a mirror facing a mirror  
you and I  
united

when she cries I cry

me and my mother  
though we drove through life  
at night with no headlights  
she absolutely brightened  
my whole world unfastened  
my inner light illuminating  
my being bright and whole  
and I swear it, I promise  
to God she's holy

my mother  
her whole being is light  
glowing from head to toe  
she is a lotus unfolding  
with white petals  
whirling up and out of  
her soul past roots  
soil & mulching  
a wild blossom rolling  
on an open road and  
I am simply a branch of  
her growing  
she's a beautiful rose with  
thorns showing  
donning a bright white  
gown flowing & floating  
a few inches above ground  
from limb to stem  
she's rosy

we drove past  
pink flowers popping out  
betwixt the pricks of cacti  
and pasted plush & pretty  
powder blue carnations  
on the skyline  
passed the pansies  
peeling out over  
cracked pots and  
flower bulbs with  
roots in knots  
the pride of  
a rare orchid family

my mother  
she has eyes like heaven's windows  
like hallways that lead into forever  
like stairwells that climb higher than  
ten lighthouses stacked taller than  
two gods standing on top of each  
others shoulders on tippy toes  
giants shrink in her shadow  
her halo is a bouquet of sunflowers  
she speaks and her wind moves  
the clouds looming around me  
in fact she lassos a freckled moon  
for my imagination to use on the  
canvas of coloring books where  
back in my childhood  
I was often subdued and  
mostly consumed by wonder

my mother

I saw her push away the thunder  
I saw her draw in the entire  
atmosphere and blow away all the  
clouds I saw her soak up all my rain  
by dragging her gown all  
for her sun to rise and come out  
once again

she is a cluster of stars  
disguised as bone and skin  
a purple bell flower ringing in the  
wind a true gypsy with a true story to  
tell made possible by wanderlust that  
began with a kiss  
the incredible adventures of  
a mother and her three kids

my mother

she's a beautiful night rider  
a gorgeous kite flyer  
with a heart the size of  
a planet in motion  
enveloping me  
womb-like from birth  
to spiritual infancy  
forever young in infinity  
a candle wick in search of  
a dancing intensity  
a flame that gently  
dazzles within me  
cupping me in her  
arms like a calla lily

when my glow was empty

my mother would slowly  
rock me to sleep  
cradle me lovingly  
her long flowing hair  
softly brushing my cheek  
whispering even softer  
now there there be meek

although we drove through life  
at night with no headlights  
with enough fuel to fill  
a parking lot full of cars  
enough rain to fill  
a desert full of tears  
enough tears to fill  
a monk full of prayers  
a heart full of beats  
and bumps to pump  
enough healing back  
into my scars and  
life back into her years  
she absolutely brightens  
my whole entire world, unfastens  
my inner light illuminating  
my being bright and whole  
and I swear it I promise  
to God she's holy

## **HAIKU FOR MOM**

Your ink flows through me.  
Thanks for the wonderful gift.  
Plans to save the world.

## **ENGINES OR BODIES OR WINGS**

Those who are not dreaming of waking  
will remain sleeping in their  
daydreams and without engines or  
bodies or wings I'll be riding on a  
wavelength of awakening aviating in  
my conscious leap.

## THE DRUNKEN SUFI

when I talk about wine  
I talk about exploring  
the unknown or my  
own ignorance and I'm  
ok with being oblivious

I'm ok with looking  
slightly foolish and  
asking the winemaker  
questions like  
“what other fruits did you  
ferment with these grapes?  
or “just how much cinnamon  
did you decide to put in this?”  
“what do you mean by *vintage*?”

see, Rumi the great Persian  
poet once said to  
“sell your cleverness and  
purchase bewilderment.”

to dump your pockets filled  
to the seams with Rupees  
and let go of the dazzling show  
of life and surrender to its beauty

that it's better to be awestruck  
then all knowing it's better to  
get lost in the mystery of life  
and take all that you think

you know and cast it aside  
and become a castaway  
shipwrecked on the shores  
of the sublime and allow the  
tide to softly carry you in

clinging to the wreckage is  
quite possibly the only sin  
that you can commit

so get lost and exhausted  
and sprawl yourself out on the  
golden shores of a new world  
pawn your intellect and  
gather up all your wreckage  
and whatever's left of your  
treasure chests and invest  
in the staggering stock  
of the uncharted waters  
of self

because the real wealth isn't  
found in deep pockets  
or expensive wines or in  
all the Queen's diamonds  
it's found in the fat of  
looking towards the future,  
in the richness of adventure,  
and in the kindling of romance,  
and all that can lend itself  
to pulse and make the heart beat

wine is a world that  
I do not know one that  
the sea-green waves of  
chance gracefully washed me  
in on one day a treasure island  
so to speak replete with rubies  
and emeralds and all the  
glimmering jewels  
you'd ever want to keep

but the real wealth isn't  
found in deep pockets  
or expensive wines or in  
all the Queen's diamonds  
it's found in the fat of  
looking towards the future,  
in the richness of adventure,  
and in the kindling of romance,  
it's found in the electricity  
that gives birth to pulse  
then sends shock waves  
throughout your spirit  
electrifying the whole being  
and gives the heart its beat

when I talk about wine  
I talk about letting go  
of the safe harbor and  
cutting the bowlines free

I talk about tossing  
your compass overboard

and letting the calm cool  
breath of the gods fill your  
sails and boldly steer  
you out to sea and finally  
discovering that your very  
own floating soul is the  
only vessel you seek

they called Rumi The Drunken Sufi  
because of his love of dancing  
he believed that all the beauty  
that we perceive to be out there is  
actually in here, inside of us, that we  
mirror life in precious layers

that the stars are merely chandeliers  
catching the light reflecting our spirits  
so we have no right not to be bold  
we are obligated to out whirl and  
out dance the tornadoes that baffle us,  
cause we are the chalices of which  
the fine wines of life are poured into

so when I talk about wine  
I'm talking about us

## LETTER TO LIAM

Dear Liam,

upon receiving the  
news of your death  
I drove to your parents' house  
I sped as fast as I could  
as fast as a heavy foot  
and trembling hands and  
blurred eyes could carry me

I threaded traffic carelessly  
radio blaring and clouds bouncing  
off the windshield glare  
I was buried in sorrow

I felt hollow as though  
I had lost all of my leaves

my branches shrank skinny  
my eyes looked empty  
tears clustered on my  
eyelashes like grapes  
slipping from vines

harvest had arrived  
but I was too weak to  
carry her wooden crates

holy fruit in worldly coffins

I arrived at your house  
with a cheap bouquet of  
flowers in hand somehow

I don't remember buying them

I don't even remember falling  
into your parents' arms quivering  
and hyperventilating chanting  
your name as a divine hymn

the room fell silent

for a moment  
I dreamt that you were a  
lit candle with endless wax  
lighting up the night sky forever

I dreamt that you were tucked  
between the wings of angels  
and those angels would swoop  
through the vineyards and  
gently sew you back together

that they would take all of  
your beautiful tannins  
your ash, your leather  
your bitter but brilliant feathers  
and softly sew you back together  
forever for us

for the suffering

for the sulfur swimming in the  
back of my throat and across my  
palate

for your parents' sobbing ripe clusters  
of tears in the kitchen, into their wine  
glasses, in the very moment I was  
dreaming of angels, our tears were  
pelting the copper colored linoleum  
and all of our shoulders were wet with  
wine

your mother is beautiful  
she looked younger than  
I remembered and lighter too  
her red hair and white aura  
still cast a pinkish glow,  
you should see it,  
it illuminates the garden

your father, The Balthazar, started  
a bottle of '06 Walter Clore Private  
Reserve, in minutes it was polished

and for hours we thumbed through  
old pictures, shared your stories,  
your defeats and glories,

I wondered how many  
Northwest Trains and brick walls  
bared your name in Krylon paint

I wondered how many hearts  
were still wearing your graffiti

I kept waiting for you to come out  
of your room how you used to

your blue jeans slightly  
sagging over your hip,  
a thrift store button-up  
draped crookedly over  
your torso, your backpack  
slung over your shoulder

a heart full of notebooks,  
full of rhymes,  
full of all kinds of "I'm gonnas"  
but there was only an empty hum  
ghostly rolling out from the vents.

the suspense was sickening

but you're still here  
your music, your letters,  
your poems and your paint  
are all still here just as you left them  
as though you had never left

Liam you were loved  
you are still loved and  
you will forever be loved

I keep your letters in my glove box,

the needle on the record,  
and your name is still in  
heavy rotation in my new circles

the Wine Angels have scattered  
you over the terrain of memory,  
and every now and again, every  
so often a lush new story comes  
blossoming forward and  
brings you back to life.

Your friend,  
Jordan

## I CRIED

It's that one of a kind  
uncontrollable crying spell

it's that certain moment  
when a certain song  
plays those certain chords  
in that agonizing way kind of cry

almost like your ghost is being  
snake-charmed or drawn  
right out of your skin against your will  
slipping through your bones  
gripping your heart strings  
with all of its might like  
all of your memories  
that you tried so hard  
to outrun and hide from  
all cornered you all at once  
then left you in a pit to die  
kind of cry

so with a splash of Atlantis  
in my sunken eye  
the other day  
when nobody was watching  
when I knew  
I was absolutely alone

I cried

I mean I really  
opened up and wept  
big baby tears leapt  
from my lashes  
I let it all out  
and let all of  
yesterday's ashes  
blow away

first a cloud formed  
then a storm  
then a monsoon ensued  
and capsized my pontoon  
too then a flood  
then the ceiling caved in and  
all the buckets and  
pots filled up  
I was completely imbued

it felt good too  
it was cleansing  
like taking a bath  
the salt exalted me

Shakespeare speared it  
when he said  
“to weep is to make less  
the depth of grief.”

and that day the clouds  
found me under defeat  
wading in an indigo water world

with tears up to my teeth  
and bleeding ink!

I cried until the whites of my eyes  
were reddish pink

my eyes were islands  
they were twin waterfalls  
rushing in soft silence  
like crystal-eyed angels  
were dying to slip and slide  
from the wet roofs of my eyelids  
and leap from clouds  
where sunbeams are arrows  
shooting out through saline  
creating bright rainbows  
in the wondrous hereafter  
where tears are painfully aching  
to be windblown  
by one's own laughter

I cried  
all day long  
at sunrise a somber song  
a moistened yawn  
a pond at dawn  
memories like  
bright koi fish  
swam boisterously  
up my waterfall as  
I fell upon the  
morning lawn

like dew

they grew and they grew  
rambunctious & unruly  
a typhoon at high noon  
from within my saloon  
the wild west tears shot out  
my heart was as wide and empty as  
15 paces between two gunslingers  
squeezing water pistols  
as I paced about

and by nightfall all I could see was  
aquamarine streams cascading from  
night dreams that I was dreaming

I couldn't sleep so I cried  
late into the evening  
gritting my teeth  
then buried my head so deep  
into my pillow feathers  
flew from my ears  
I hid my eyes and my fears  
deep in the cotton

I cried as much as I  
possibly could that day

in fact I became the ocean  
I sobbed seahorses and starfish  
I wailed with the whales  
I wept so much I made Poseidon blush

my chest opened like the ocean  
and the whirlpools swallowed  
all of my secret slave ships up  
and it freed me!

howling so deeply; it was a prayer.

gargantuan God-like tears  
the size of globes  
free-fell from my third eye  
and on my knees  
I thanked God that  
I met an angel  
just as wet as me  
so that we can both fly  
into the cool white pools of our irises  
where deep visions are nearsighted

that day felt like an eternity  
I thought I would never stop crying  
but like all my troubles  
even this had to pass

then all at once the waves subsided  
and I realized that that was it  
the tears that I had been crying  
that day were so much they floated  
me up to the top and out of my pit

## TRAFFIC LIGHTS

as I squint

the streetlights look like stars  
stretching across the night sky

and the headlights of cars  
look like spinning quasars  
the brake lights look like Mars  
but rectangular and deformed

the traffic lights are swirling  
planets in orbit absorbing  
all of everything into blurs

it's cosmic havoc

and I see the universe  
reflected in city traffic

## LIGHT

as an offering

I will give you  
eons of bouquets of constellations  
and the sunray's progeny of  
illuminations  
vineyards of solar systems  
I'll harvest for you

my fetish is feathered  
with thoughts of you

the way the sunlight travels  
at light speed  
ever so lightly

on ether to reach your  
incandescent complexion  
as soothing winds pass  
gently through heavens  
through strands of your hair  
that's sun-kissed and  
softly dressing your divinely  
charged aura

and I stare

I stare at things  
I know are not there  
beautiful things

that are just chimerical carvings  
of my mind's imaginings  
your love must be maddening

because I detect  
dimensions of rhythms  
and out of worldly prisms  
that send me rising past  
the zenith like a phoenix  
beyond suns that have fully risen  
and you gleam and you glisten

like the reflection of  
starlight multiplied by twilight  
then magnified 1,000 times  
off of the mirror that touches  
my soul's vision

it's blinding  
brightly lighting  
new designs of lightning  
inside of my enlightening

it creeps and it seeps  
into the depths  
where my heart is  
encrusted with darkness  
and I'm telling you now  
if no one else has we all  
are truly starlit beauties

that come without warning

an aesthetic storming warming  
every single one of my infinite life's  
journeys transforming my yearnings

of old paths I used to seek  
I'm dropping the skin now  
forever living within now

no longer holding on to  
the things I know I could  
never keep like precious  
jewels or precious loot  
or even more precious  
above all is the most  
precious side of you

I sometimes pursue  
into the affluent  
treasury of my reveries  
in search of a rebirth  
that will measure me  
timelessly and ever new  
and I'll find that when  
we are one

enamored with  
glamorous light  
that is a phantom's kiss  
from lantern lips

because  
we are all

the products of  
stars and suns

we are all  
the products of  
stars and suns

and you see things  
the same way i believe  
and i conceive us to be

slivers and shards of the broken glass  
of the omni-window that is God's heart

photosynthesis of art  
you fill me with light

and I'm high on life  
like she be bringing me  
bouquets of poetic poppies

I'm like up late at night slinging  
kilos of immortal stardust  
to the heartless for their catharsis  
cause it's marvelous to watch life  
without watching our watches

our nature is clock-less

my eyes  
slowly skim and skip across  
blackened oolong-colored

skies I'm lost when the moon  
blows me her silver kisses

I'm drunken with moonshine  
inundated with ambience eternally  
fermenting in light's chrysalis

it takes discipline and focus to sit  
indian-style or full lotus  
while flames and smoke  
roll and float upwards  
from your aura's wholeness

sacrifice and boldness  
are the only ways  
to break the mold  
holding control of your soul  
that's carved from the  
same substance as light

spaced out! and star struck!  
I'm in love with light

## **IMMORTAL**

I broke the bow

when I drew back  
the arrow of my soul

I let go and it flew

forever

**FOREVER WAITING**  
(a collaboration with Sarah Watson)

patience means that  
you must deny time  
its illusive power  
over you

that you should  
pretend to be a  
golden swan perfectly  
perched upon a lotus  
in a pond your wings  
folded in and riding the  
pond's ripples  
forever outward

and there you can  
rise like the lotuses  
endless petals getting  
stuck in the air  
like tethered clouds  
like kites above  
the so called  
power lines

cause up there  
time is sitting still  
the sun dial is smiling  
at me while her long  
shadow stretches with  
mine across the skyline

connecting with constellations  
and outlining a new path home  
eventually

I'm constantly bombarding  
the world with my plans,  
calendars and clocks, rushing  
through traffic MAN

I just can't seem to sit still  
my watch watches me tick  
I hesitate to meditate  
even though I am  
desperate to self-explore

to draw back the arrow  
of my soul break the bow  
and let go to fly forever

to throw banana peels  
and pop cans in the  
gas tank of my DeLorean  
to burn rubber in the sky  
kicking hourglasses over  
on their side peeling out  
past the North Star  
speeding like Pegasus  
pushing the pedal to the  
metal all to be born again

I'm waiting on forever  
but waiting on forever

is like expecting to arrive  
in a place where forever  
is supposed to begin and  
denying the very real fact  
that you are already in it  
and it in you  
it lives

it lives in those moments  
that sit still when you catch  
yourself drifting off staring  
into nothing seemingly but  
that nothing is actually something  
that is gently sucking you in  
it sorta feels like your  
consciousness is crossing  
over into another dimension  
that you're not really quite  
sure ever existed, but it does  
it lives... in us

so I am desperate to walk into  
myself, into my body's temple  
and light the incense and  
chant primordial hymns  
with a choir of monks, for my  
higher self to beam 1000 watts  
brighter and levitate even higher  
than it once was...

so

I'm strapping NASA's Rockets to the  
helix of my spine and winding back  
the hands of time so that I can leave  
myself clues like fortune cookies  
but in the form of papyrus scrolls  
or maps giving myself keys to  
the locks of these self-made traps

cause up here  
I no longer believe in death  
its carcass has found itself  
at the dinner table of kings

only believers in life shall live  
and life has been found wading  
in the oceans of my dreams

waiting has never been what  
it seems quite possibly a safe  
place to heal for those moments  
that sit still just so happen  
to reveal unto me a door  
cracking open and lighting  
my way, outlining a new path  
home into eternity

and so I wait...

## NEW WINE

drink and be merry,  
our dreams are upon us  
the new wine's springing  
from yesterday's vines  
have grown this far  
just to fill our glasses

let your laughter  
howl louder than  
the high winds  
on the high cliffs of  
Goose Ridge,  
then laugh some more  
but even louder  
let your laughter  
hear that its own  
echo is plodding harder  
than the horses trotting  
through hills in heaven

let the sound of your  
spirit keep spreading

it's spring again  
and life is sending a message  
something like a love letter  
in a bottle, it's symbolic  
it's pitching and rolling  
over green waves  
in the ocean

in hopes that  
its ink will  
reach that moment  
when a distant lover  
gets to uncork and  
unroll its meaning

life is for the gleaning

it's for the taking  
for the dreamers and their long  
awaited forethoughts  
that manifest upon their waking  
for the ones that painstakingly  
plant their vision in granite  
and understand that  
this season brings forth  
the abundance of your own  
seed planting

so turn the music up and  
take chances because  
a new wine awaits you  
and in the distance she dances  
in lilacs and lipstick  
in starry candle lights and  
where love letters have landed,  
in a nightgown woven from  
the mystic fabrics you were handed

reward is for the romantics  
take chances

take shovels to soil

take the new wine  
of your own spirit  
and fill it with  
every honeysuckle  
every grape growing  
and blossom blossoming  
every bee buzzing  
on a bud budding  
take every dream  
of yours that has ever grown  
legs and walked over  
your way take her  
by the hand whisper  
into her ear  
your master plan

take all of yesterday's  
woes and worries  
and throw them away  
you are just as new  
as all that is new today  
drink and be merry  
be totally and utterly rapt  
with the unwrapping of a new you  
a new wine ripens within

never attempt  
to pour new wine  
into an old wine skin

don't worry about your past  
there's no turning back  
and the future is in you  
trust me it whirls inside,  
drink and be merry  
because we will forever be  
in the cleavage of where we  
have been and where we are going  
we are all infants  
at rest upon the  
breast of eternity  
enjoy the ride!

all of us; new wines  
dying on the vine

so turn the music up and  
take chances because  
a new wine awaits you  
and in the distance she dances  
in lilacs and lipstick  
in starry candle lights and  
where love letters have landed,  
in a nightgown woven from  
the mystic fabrics you were handed  
reward is for the romantics

so take shovels to dirt  
let your spirit keep spreading  
and take chances

## **APOCALYPSE HAIKU**

zombies won't roam streets  
Mayans had it all wrong too  
the end is not near

## ODE TO GRAPE

I have a crush on you  
you beautiful bulbous  
berry of the gods  
you galaxy of dark blue stars  
you plump and precious  
bottle of Pinot Noir

I simply adore you

you sometimes gorgeous green thing  
drooping a thousand times from  
paintings always nude and next to  
tulips the Pinot Gris on your two lips  
puts the kiss in kismet  
it's serendipitous the way  
we have come together

mighty migrant workers  
are up to their shins in mud  
are sweating in the sun  
are plucking darkened rubies  
all for my tongue  
getting paid in pesos  
to slave away  
for my fair love

you are endless and without edges  
a purple pearled necklace  
with a cluster of cleavage  
dangling beneath it

a scarlet goddess  
robed in a red dress  
sagging on the vine  
marauding my fantasies  
every midnight  
when the sky light is merlot-like

I love it when you  
bat your lashes at me  
while layered in lingerie  
then splash into my cup  
like purple rain and  
climax when you pass  
my tongue and come  
into long stemmed glasses  
you look like a pin-up doll  
showing off your legs & ass  
making my heart patter  
fast and then faster  
until my pulse is unfastened

alas  
you are crimson  
a succubus  
a full-bodied Jezebel  
who has had  
everybody's filthy hands on you  
from train hopping hobos  
to snobs with mountains of  
dollar bills you've slept in crates  
in dirt fields next to windmills  
in alleys next to burning barrels

and even in sheets woven  
from the finest of silks

but I don't care about  
your cheap past  
and how you were  
stepped on daily  
how your delicate skin  
has been beaten and smashed  
or when you lived in boxes  
with eyes blue & black  
to me you are a rose that grew  
from history's trash

my love is unconditional

you are both the Mother Teresa  
and Mary Magdalene of all the fruits  
a noble truth serum with heavenly  
roots and sauvignon rivers  
flowing bright though your veins  
turning tongues into pure silver  
a miracle like magic a mystic  
once summoned you from  
a glass of water  
to make men meek  
you put the vine in divine  
and now my mind is an aimless  
cork afloat a placid sea  
sacred grape to saintly mate  
hallowed be thy taste  
Ms. Holy Water if you please

I love you  
because when I was sour  
when my heart was withering  
away like a raisin in the sun  
when every part of me shattered  
asunder and I was picking up  
the pieces all over the streets  
you stood by in the countryside  
waiting for me to mature  
and then cherry-blossomed into my  
life singing a song of dreams of  
tomorrows and swept all of my  
sorrows away

I want you to know that

sitting on the couch with you  
is enough for me  
we can watch the sun  
melt like gold into the hills  
we can imagine that the  
sun is sinking into the earth  
and impregnating her with  
our hopes and with our dreams  
we can watch as she gives  
birth as the harvest  
ripens and comes forth  
and brings our visions  
full circle back into being  
and so when we toast we'll know  
that our souls are swallowing  
their own dreams

## BEYOND THE CRUSH

A red man usually I am  
rolling in the sheets with  
my scantily-clad petit faithful  
smashing grapes between our teeth  
in a dream state high above sleep  
lost in purple mountains and fruited  
plains where desire has me wakeful

though I fell asleep beneath the  
flowers

in this case, one day under an  
umbrella a sleazy little Riesling came  
drizzling by a sweet but dry, apple of  
my eye, a fair pear unparalleled with  
legs that paired perfectly well with my  
goblet cause I'm a grape goblin with  
fangs that feast on the fruit of the  
flesh so pardon my Kama

I can explain!

I'm losing my marbles darlin'  
your legs are two Greek Pillars  
climbing high into white heavens,  
they flirt with the gods,  
you're a green-eyed goddess,  
a firecracker scarlet starlet  
lipstick on the collar with  
bonfire hair and pink and

peach freckles speckled sexily  
from head to toe, a sweetheart  
that's hard to wallow with...

your legs have walked all the  
way from Austria they deserve  
an applause and the wine tasters  
are surely a flooded audience  
I just want to be lost in  
the storm of your bra  
lost in the vineyard's thralls  
with a young fly virgin from  
Germany laced from toe to waist  
in laces from Alsace  
a French maid made to  
bathe in a golden lake  
for goodness sake she  
sparkles with greatness

you could say I'm high  
on her winetasting

you don't understand!

your puckered lips, your blown kisses  
are a smoking pistil you're a smoking  
mistress on Red Mountain holding a  
Cuban-rolled stogie smoking beneath  
your nose with nylon-legs crossed in  
full body language and crisscrossing  
your heart, good God your hot!

en fuego, I'll dance the tango with you  
Senorita in rain right as golden  
sangria! Mama Mia, I need to decant  
I'm panting the soul of Italy in my  
riddles playing a fiddle skipping along  
singing a silver man's song sipping  
kerosene from a canteen as this sleazy  
little Riesling honey-coats tongue!

give me a chance!

I want to wrap you in a hammock  
knap you in the sack and find you  
napping softly in the lap of Napa  
Valley slowly disrobing to lightning  
and thundering rolling in the covers  
like Riesling lovers so much so that  
I've been labeled a drunk intoxicated  
by your loving

I love her lush lashes how they rise up  
like Marilyn Monroe's skirt after a  
gust of steam blasts the model in a  
bottle or the actress I want to sip from  
my mattress I'm a maverick after it  
and she's a high-maintenance  
balancing act that's constantly on my  
conscience, noble rot or spoiled brat I  
have no other choice but to nickname  
you Constance

It's not my fault!

you're smashing, a hoot, I get a kick  
out of you a laughing spasm, a grape-  
gasm for the grabbing a berry special  
double entendre your name a  
winemaker's mantra so come fly with  
Sinatra

what more can I say?

forgive me...

I'm a Brut  
and you're a rare but fair-skinned  
Champagne, a high-yellow red-bone  
crush so busty and buxom that the  
buttons are busting off your  
bottle of bubbly, you're a bottle of lust  
for the guzzling the loveliest trouble  
that's always ripe for the tussling –

could you blame me?

no more excuses!  
it's better to stick with the truth  
you are simply the cutest fruit to have  
ever seduced me

## MOONSHINE

Even with the stars on foot patrol  
and the sun rolling surveillance  
some how, some way  
you've bagged illumination,  
you robbed a full moon  
for its gentle white glow,  
and it shows, like new jewels  
in the window on display  
your pearly corona splayed.  
and good thing you did  
nab the night for its day—  
it looks much better  
sprouted about your  
delicate shoulders  
and beaming face...

## **GODDESS**

Truth is  
I've got no game  
you are divine  
a breath of fresh air  
to new lungs  
a poem in motion  
your ink leaping  
from every couplet  
and sonnet ever written  
I'm smitten.  
Amber waves flowing  
over oceans  
between continents  
connecting our consciousness  
palms full of lotus blossoms  
I'm awestruck you're  
that awesome  
a cosmic Goddess  
donning a starlit garland  
levitating through an  
eternal garden...

## WARRIOR

You're beautiful to me  
but I couldn't simply  
call you pretty.

Pickup lines  
about dimples and shells  
are often hollow  
and empty

I always fall in  
somehow.

Don't be mad at me  
just take this as  
free music or  
poetic flattery

I've been scorched  
by the light of my own  
enlightenment.

Cashed in love, for ammo.  
Lit my stove with  
old poems even.

Now we're at war

and

You're a warrior

you are the revolutionary  
that I have always wanted  
in my circle, on my side.  
I gobble your propaganda  
up like scarce rations.

My heart beats  
like street riots; you smash  
my windows and set fire  
to my prayer rugs and temples.

Beautifully cruel; spotless.

Your eyelashes are weapons that  
bat arrows into my quiet peace.

So colonize me  
maraud my huts  
loot my throat  
for all of its metaphors

You leave me speechless

You're a ripe peach  
an orchard's high priestess  
you bonfire the trees  
just to free your flames  
nobody can handle  
your sweetness

Though I'm glad you came.

Astral artistry you come  
from stars obviously  
you're beyond a work of art  
polished and carved marble  
Mona Lisa be damned  
a broken dam  
your beauty has  
flooded my lands

Once again

The past  
has left me scarred  
and I know that girls from  
the future dig scars  
way more than  
fancy cars and  
here we are.

## SHE'S FLY

she's fly  
and not just like slang in '85  
she's fly like angel's wings on babies  
dangling from clouds in Raphael  
Santi's famous painting fly like  
Michelangelo's hanging masterpiece  
God's creation

and she speaks the language  
of eternity with love skinnydipping  
from the tip of her tongue she could be  
the one I've been waiting for and  
possibly the one that I came for

'cause I swear I would harvest every  
star from every galaxy for her I would  
and if I could I would scribble both of  
our names in the moon

and trace them with a heart  
together there forever never to be  
touched by weather

versus the world that we live in  
that seems to be withering away  
and falling apart all around us but we  
bloom two of a kind working in unison  
like one mind

she is my queen  
and I am her worker bee  
building a honeycomb in her beehive  
pollinating patiently 'cause this  
worker bee be longing for her inside

and yes  
I know that that metaphor could have  
been written by a child but the truth  
is she makes me smile so my youth is  
let loose and running wild, I'm feeling  
the way I used to feel so it's  
worthwhile

you see, I went from walking on water  
to completely drowning

to finally finding someone who keeps  
my heart pounding

she glows  
she flies

and I don't care why  
'cause here in the afterlife  
she conquers the heavens soaring  
through the skies apparently  
transparent blending in with the  
horizon or even disguised in  
the wings of butterflies  
1000 watts brighter than fireflies  
a flying angel with bonfires

like burning eyes  
into infinity she glides divine  
she's levitating in my mind

fly  
above the mountains  
above the falcons  
and beyond the clouds  
her aura could cool the sun down  
and she gallops through my dreams  
never touching ground

haunting me peacefully  
it's the most profound feeling  
and I just want to be part of her flight  
tonight right now I want us to leave  
our bodies together and never return  
to fly

forever beyond  
forever beyond  
forever beyond this lifetime

'cause I might have found love this  
lifetime I might have finally found  
what I came searching for when I  
crept into this lifetime and if we fly  
away now love could be ours forever

then I could sever my mind  
forever from my body  
building wings on my soul

to unfurl and leave this world

having never lost love  
and having only lost myself in love  
with her I am in love with her

I'm in love with her wings  
I'm in love with her dreams  
and I'm in love with  
the dreams she has for me  
to fly

## WORKIN' MY WAY UP

your toes are lollipops I swear it, they  
beg for thousands of licks, they want  
to dissolve onto my tongue, they long  
to vanish into a sweet nothing the way  
they tip-toe across my sweet tooth

your stilettos are a harem full of toes  
something like Egyptian harlots, they  
smother me, I'm outnumbered 10 to 1,  
I surrender! your calves are shotguns  
locked and loaded, they got my  
fingerprints all over the trigger  
they're double-barreled and I am a  
trigger-happy fool, I figure I can get  
away with a crime like this

your calves are caramel fondue, a  
waterfall of sorts pouring out of short  
shorts cascading and parading  
beneath thighs

your thighs are maddening they lock  
me up in padded rooms they tackle me  
and sedate me, I overdose on brain  
candy  
—they won't let me out no matter how  
sane I pretend to be.

my mind is a circus where King Kong  
is going bananas pounding his chest

and climbing up them. your thighs are  
that bad to be around! your legs are  
two bank robbers in fishnet masks,  
holding up my bank, sticking up the  
joint, bagging all my cash, then  
celebrating on the Pacific in Mexico  
weeks later in a hotel, popping corks,  
spilling champagne all over the place  
and all over the sheets too

your legs are a getaway car burning  
rubber, a Firebird with a golden  
phoenix tattooed to the hood, peeling  
out just blocks away from cops, I quit  
my job for them: and baby I want  
a ride!

you are as bad as they come!

your hips are cliffs that sky divers  
seek out, I dive off of them and into  
them—  
sometimes my chute feels like it may  
not open but I take my chances hoping  
that you will catch me somehow

your hips look like vintage  
bookshelves full of books on Kama  
Sutra poses and prose, they've got  
metaphor written all over them and  
I'm your most studious student a

slightly rude prude but still showing  
prudence for your literature

your ass is a sold-out rock concert,  
head banger heaven, I smash my  
guitar on stage, I kick the drums over,  
the mosh pit loses total control but the  
show must go on so I stage dive, I  
crowd surf into your stonewashed  
jeans

your navel is a shot glass, a splash of  
tequila, a sake bomb, a pond in the  
desert, a mirage, I'm a lost and thirsty  
wanderer, lost in wonder at the sight  
of your awe

your innie has me hanging out later  
than I should I'm worried about work,  
I'm drafting lies to tell my boss, but  
your belly button presses all the right  
buttons and baby doll you are worth it!

your rib cage locked me up and threw  
away the key, it's an hourglass and  
I'm your prisoner forever, I grip your  
ribs and scream for the guards, I rattle  
my coffee mug in a clankety-clank  
against them, they're unfair, they're a  
crooked Shawshank warden extorting  
me!

and your breasts, Good God  
your breasts are two Buddhist temples  
glowing high above the jungle, and  
holy cow's milk am I a monk in search  
of his higher self, high powered and  
divine.

they are hand grenades and I pull the  
pin out with my teeth, I am Che ready  
to get the revolution started!

they are speakers on a ghetto blaster,  
a boom box that makes this hustler's  
heart beat, I lose sleep working my  
way up and I am working my way up  
'cause I just want to be on top!

the pits in your collarbones are  
antique teacups at teatime; I could  
steep all day inside of them, your neck  
is a stripper pole no a lamp post and  
at the top an atomic aura blasts the  
clothes off my bones...

and if there is anything, anything at  
all that I have forgotten, that I've  
missed, the next time you see me at  
the circus eating cotton candy and  
licking my lips, please do me a favor,  
blow me away and blow me a kiss!

## **PISTOL-WHIPPED**

For years I had been  
caught in the cross hairs  
of your crossed legs; your  
navel a barrel pressed  
softly against my forehead  
at point blank range  
me, on my knees  
gripping the pearl handle  
begging for your sweet life.

## FORTUNE

deep beneath the golden  
sands of my flesh  
beneath my deserted chest  
there has been a  
longing in my soul  
and that longing  
has created pressure  
and that pressure has  
turned my heart into  
a precious stone

the dumb luck of stumbling  
upon something rare where  
I thought there was nothing  
that could be touched but air  
you are my everything  
and I vow from this day forward  
to honor you as such

you are my sustenance  
and your words  
are my clouds like stairs  
that I climb when I feel  
that I just can't breathe  
without you by my side  
my lungs are runaway balloons  
in vanishing skies

our eyes sparkle like jewels  
like torches lighting up tombs

filled with gold  
beneath the sands of my flesh  
I'm filled with gold  
beneath my skin  
my spirit blows breath  
against my ribs  
like winds to wind chimes  
I am filled with your song

and together our spirits sing  
to the high heavens times seven  
while showered in blessings  
from above and beyond

our hearts are brightened  
rubies pulsating jewelry  
as we walk in unity  
your hand in my palm

(forever) like a diamond  
you are like a diamond  
you shine even when in a dark cave  
and 10x brighter when the sun bathes

your love is grand it glows  
and the grandeur has captured  
my soul from where all of my  
abundance flows it's the only  
wealth that I care to know  
therefore I surrender bones  
my indigence and poverty

going forth  
I am lighting my home  
with nothing more than the  
oil of your aura from  
your lamp to my lamp  
the flame ebbs and flows

so that in the infinite we will be  
lit like candlesticks and our wax  
will pour endless down our firearms  
flowing from our heart's core

I want you to know that  
you are adored that you are truly  
heaven's blessed ornament  
the master's masterpiece

and its worlds beyond  
anything like worship  
I would battle a warship armed  
with nothing more than an ore  
for you

there are not enough  
treasures in this world that compare  
to my wealth emeralds pour out of the  
clouds and diamond-filled mountains  
don't even begin to amount with  
the fortune I have built with you

I'm on wings  
it's beyond butterflies

swarming in a whirling  
vortex in my stomach  
it's complex it's  
in my solar plexus  
from my silver tongue  
to your pearl necklace  
my cup runneth over  
the whole world over  
the spill is measureless

and I only know this  
because I only notice  
when I'm next to you  
what I'm trying to say  
is that I treasure you  
I do

## **TXT MSG FOR HER INSOMNIA**

overhead  
sheep leap  
and kick clouds  
so sleep deep my love  
tomorrow is wrapped in  
today's sheets

## **FLY**

All of their wind is tangled in the trees  
and their breath never seems to take  
the shape they want. My tornadoes  
are clearing pathways to your hearts.  
The chances of us all escaping this  
time are greater than they have ever  
been...

I say we all hold hands and leap

## ANOTHER GIGANTIC DREAM

it's recurring, my pillow shrinks  
to a cotton ball during sleep

and last night I had another  
dream that I was a giant

my footprints created ponds  
I could even cup the sun in my palms

and my laughter rang out  
around the rings of Saturn  
I defied science

my clothes were ten times too small  
and upon my shoulders I saw  
bird's nests and moss covering  
my colossal worn cloth

I looked mountainous; cypress.  
the tallest trees came  
only to my knees

even the statue of liberty  
was a pygmy next to me  
it was lonely being the only one  
this tall but at least I was free

## THE ICARUS ODE

Son,

Remember that time  
I said I would fight a  
bear for you? I meant  
it and this is what  
I meant by it...

a father's love is  
sometimes grizzly  
and hard to describe  
so you owe it to both  
your life and mine  
to climb

I dare you to defy gravity

I dare you to  
crane your neck back  
outstretch your arms  
point your toes towards  
the earth and lift off

in fact I double dog no  
I triple double dog dare you  
to light the rockets idling  
on standby in your heart's  
chakra and take off flying

I'll even stitch a Nike swoosh

into the side of your aviator cap

I'll scoop cotton clouds out of  
the sky by the palm-full with  
rocket fuel and stuff them  
in your jet pack

I'm here to help you light the fuse.

I'm here to help your rockets  
blast off and shoot and  
watch the dreams of your  
inner space manifest  
in your outer space

and to make sure that  
the crows that would  
try to stop you choke on the  
chemtrails you fume the  
sky with... all powder blue.

oh the places you'll glow  
upward and outward

and this could just be  
the big sappy heart of  
fatherly love but I know  
that you're special  
you're truly different  
and I can see that  
all of their wind is  
tangled in the trees

and their breath  
never seems to take  
the shape they want  
but your tornadoes can  
clear pathways to their  
hearts and free them  
'cause the chances of us  
all escaping this time  
are greater than they  
have ever been

I say we hold each other's  
hands and leap

and if you begin  
to freefall in life  
because in life you will  
get that sensation that  
feeling that no nets  
will catch you, that there  
are no clouds to claw  
no safety lines to cling to  
when all of your wax  
has melted

your feathers falling in  
slow motion all around you  
just know that I will  
always be here for you

fighting the bears

may you burn so brightly  
that any rain cloud would  
dissipate in your presence

a force field borne from lessons

‘cause we fathers see ourselves  
as weathered staircases for  
our children to climb to greater  
heights—heights that couldn’t be  
reached without the constant  
guidance, the coloring on walls  
of heaven or the mapping  
out of the skies when tucking  
you into bed at night, it’s all  
for the growth, for the flight,  
for the dipping of the arrowheads  
of our spirits into the oil of life  
to fly forward with courage

Khalil Gibran said that  
“We are the bows from which  
our children as living arrows  
are sent forth.”

and to think that when I was  
15 years old I cried and begged  
your mom to have an abortion

I was scared of course  
but now that you’re 17  
and I look into your

large brown eyes  
and I watch your shoulders  
begin to widen like mine  
I'll admit it, I'm still  
just as frightened  
as the day that I found  
out that I had a living  
breathing child alive  
inside of that very woman  
I cried too  
though we don't get  
along anymore  
I know that she  
was a lot wiser  
than I, 'cause today  
I honestly would be  
lost in life without you  
every day my heart  
swells with pride  
I'm so glad you're mine

I'm opening the door  
and giving you the keys  
to the sky, wax and feathers,  
but more importantly  
a map to yourself that  
you will find

may you fly so high that  
the angels have to look up to you  
for guidance, that your never  
ending story is one filled with

triumph and tails of love  
and super human pilots  
fighting crime

I read somewhere along  
the path that we should  
raise our children to be  
messiahs.

that we should leave open  
the windows of their young  
minds in the event of the  
night falling to silent  
so they can defy gravity  
with one wing of the arts  
the other wing of sciences

whatever happens from  
here on out it'll be me and  
you forever and ever and ever  
and we've got a whole lab full of  
wax and feathers and treasures  
plus we're clever so we can fly  
forever and ever and ever  
if we have to we'll strap  
the jetpacks on ourselves  
we'll turn and crank the  
pulleys and pistons and get them  
to spinning in our hearts and  
pull the tarps off of our wings,  
jumpstart our engines  
and oil up our flying parts

that have rusted over  
then we will fly... with sheer will  
'cause it's never ever ever over  
even though sometimes that's  
how it may feel, just know that  
you will move all the mountains  
you please with a gentle  
flapping of your wings,  
and you will reach higher  
states of awareness and being  
that I could never reach  
'cause you and I—we'll go on  
flapping forever, our hearts  
pulsing like propellers as  
we softly lift off together  
father and son escaping gravity  
leaping from the tower, and  
maybe this way its better...

## YARN HAIKU

We're all just tangled  
balls of yarn trying to un-  
ravel our way home.

## NOTES ON A TRAIN TO BIG SUR

Amtrak train carts are a string of pop cans hurling themselves gently into fading horizons, outskirts of small towns, untouched dark lush forests and the motherly cradling of train bridges. I see a faint reflection of *me* on the face of the looking glass—I look superimposed on the smear of endless landscapes we pass through. She gently wobbles eastward city-by-city and farm-by-farm, rocking me to sleep; it's womblike.

The staff and even the conductor lack social skills. I pretend that I'm talking to stones and moss that have no idea what it's like to be bursting with stars. They have no idea that they are just giants tied down by spider webs. I imagine that they have been lulled into a sleepy zombie-like trance by the constant motion, the constant coming and going in straight circles, never arriving at any real destination, long faces jailed in by wrinkles, and bloodshot eyes that hold no glare. I pray that my bonfire grows violently forever but stays soft and approachable as a newborn's drool-filled cheek.

...and the passing streetlights are  
large guardian statues holding torches  
high above the train. Behind us they  
blend in with the setting  
constellations. They are stars wired  
together blowing one another kisses,  
serenading the night clouds and  
casting their ghostly neck-like  
shadows on billowing engine smoke.

Ten hours later we all wake up and  
yawn in symphony—the whole choir.  
Retired train carts covered from toe to  
skull in rust surround us. Some of  
them have graffiti on them from the  
1980s—they are ancient tombs with  
eroding hieroglyphics. There are  
indecipherable messages smeared in  
the corner of my eye. Stray dogs and  
scrap metal are ornaments here. The  
only treasure to be had is the leaving  
of stones unturned and filling your  
pockets with the jewels of wonder.  
Besides, the transients and the  
hounds have pissed on everything;  
everything is now rust; even the sun  
averts its wild blazing eye. Not even  
the vines will touch these sad carts.  
The train is a needle threading its way  
through a hobo's lean-to, the gathering  
grounds of stray dogs and cats, and

the sinking sun bobbing and throbbing on the skyline. I'm aggravated that we've stopped. I miss the motion. And to top it all off, the woman wearing coke bottles next to me won't shut the hell up about her damn cat! But she's sweet and anxious to get home, so I listen genuinely. Perfect strangers like her are all too common and her simple joy is not so common these days.

Five hours past Portland there are fields filled with sheep. A new cast of travelers have filled the seats all around me. The guy next to me moved to find cushy seating—all of the new strangers are in the same mood: zombie. It eats your heart out to think that humanity is asleep with clipped wings.

There's a circle of trees a mile from our train. They're holding hands and bowing their heads as if in prayer. It's spiritual. I'm starting to get the feeling that my soul is shedding its skin again. I have dove into fires like this before—on the road—Greyhound busses from coast to coast, station wagon with mom across country when I was a kid, falling into depressions and clawing my way back out. I have

lived all varieties of the phoenix bird.  
It's been spiritual; it always is  
spiritual for me.

The train jerks to a stop right outside  
of a prison. A dozen or so glossy-eyed  
passengers are smoking and tossing  
small talk back and forth like spare  
change. We can see inmates in the  
windows, we're all staring at each  
other. We're curious about the stories  
behind what they did; they just want  
to know where we're going. Our hearts  
are poker hands that we will never get  
to see.

My gods, the night is falling fast, the  
stars, they look like candlelit lanterns  
softly parachuting to earth. Half of the  
train is drunk; the other half of us are  
intoxicated from the scenery.

Mountains like breasts of goddesses,  
pink clouds swallowed by blackness.  
The whole train trembles as we push  
through ecstasy. I've never traveled  
like this before, where angels can peel  
the ether back like curtains and spy  
on my highest fantasies.

After ten hours on a train with  
strangers, well, the strange  
evaporates and you see yourself in

them, someone that has been waiting to break the silence. Now fifteen hours away from destiny, perfect strangers are milking the moon of its entire glow.

Palm trees in the fall are like a drunk relative wearing a Hawaiian shirt at a funeral, unless you're here. We're limping along littered tracks in San Jose, through smog-filled sky; the sun looks like a soft peach shedding its fuzz over the distant hills. Everything close to the train, the businesses and the neighborhoods, are the filthiest you've ever seen, but just a few peeks above the city-top beauty reigns supreme as far as you can see.

I'm getting closer. On a shuttle to Monterey there's a group of French tourists bickering with the driver about "smoke, a smoke break." She is ignoring them by telling me about all of the glory and majesty of Big Sur. The French tourists are curling their lips and talking about "rude Americans," the driver quips back with "rude French people." I can't help but laugh and then I am immediately absorbed into the yellow blue and pink clouds hovering over the ocean.

There are some experiences and environments so divinely rare that trying to put words to them would be as futile as trying to explain the theory of relativity to a fruit fly—it would nag you mad! My few days spent at Big Sur were beyond poetry, beyond words, and if trying to describe it to people sent you into a manic state, the beauty and intelligence that you have soaked in from the utopia would undoubtedly rescue you from the badlands of your psyche upon your humble request. It's God's Mona Lisa. See, what an awful description that was; my own metaphor betrays me.

When a 20-year-old girl on a train  
asks a 22-year-old guy  
“How old do I look?”

What she's really asking is am I pretty enough to be loved or made love to. But what she's saying is can you love me the way my father couldn't, could you carry me when my arms are full of my own tears, can you heal my wounds, please, I will give you my outsides if you care for my insides, I'll give you all my flesh just to hear you fake the words *I love you*. The two are in for a counterfeit trade. She'll fake

orgasms with real tenderness. And he will fake love for it. The joy will fade into a blur like the scenery we're speeding past. We want to hold on to the sun melting into a wavy puddle on the lake, but it's impossible. It sinks and gets washed up on the memory banks like a muddy waterlogged boot missing its other half. Love is a moving target, it requires a constant chasing, more and more logs if the bonfire is going to be wild. She's dead inside and she sees sex as the only living thing she has to offer him, like a bright flower resting on a tomb in a graveyard. She's a wandering ghost waiting to ascend. And he, he's got nowhere to go, so why not.

Sy Safransky is the leader of the retreat I'm heading to in Big Sur. He created *The Sun Magazine* thirty years ago. They recently advertised a contest to win an all-expense-paid writing retreat. They chose two people to go the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, CA. I was a lucky winner!

Right now, on the train, I am sitting near three burly fellas wearing dirty cover-alls and they've got more scruff than Vikings. Behind them there are

two ladies in their early thirties holding a baby. The two ladies are complaining to all of the passengers about the “rude inconsiderate idiot staff and asshole conductor, they’re like talking to freakin’ rocks I swear!” The baby is hunched over the back of the seat with a gigantic smile, gleaming with drool. The three men can’t see it but they have childhood smeared all over their faces. They are just as giddy and happy as the baby that they can’t seem to pry their eyes off of. Sy, when reading notes from his notebook yesterday morning at the retreat, said, “Babies make us feel beautiful when we’re in their presence.” The obnoxious train is filled with baby light right now; it’s beautiful. The baby’s name is Scarlet, but there’s nothing more pure than her on this train.

Jordan Chaney  
10-24-2011

## GLOSSARY

Words defined in order of appearance.

### TIME MACHINE

**Finite** –Limit; an end

**Hover** –To float

**Siesta** –A short nap

**Cozily** –Comfortably

**Lulled** –To soothe; quiet

### LOVE POEM

**Strobe Light** –An electronic light that flashes; Often found at celebrations or dances

**Halo** –A circle of light found above and around the head of a saint or person of divinity

**Mimic** –To imitate or resemble

**Seep** –To flow or leak

**Quench** –To satisfy by drinking

**Foresight** –An ability that allows one to predict the possible outcomes of the future

**Tsunami** –Natural disaster, A high sea wave caused by an earthquake

**Nourish** –To provide necessary substances for good health such as food and water

**Volleyball Named Wilson** –

Reference from the movie *Castaway* starring Tom Hanks. In the movie Tom Hank's character becomes so lonely that he forms a friendship with a volleyball that washed ashore with him

**Glitz** –A glamorous, superficial display

**Splendor** –A magnificent and grand appearance

**Ambitions** –One's desires and visions to achieve something in life

**Bonfire** –A large fire built outdoors

**Smoke Signals** –smoke columns used in patterns to create a message to someone

**Dandelion** –A bright yellow flower with a globular head

**ROCKET FUEL FOR DREAMERS**

**Furnace** –A structure similar to an oven sometimes fired by gas oil or wood used as a heating system

**Passion** –A strong almost uncontrollable emotion; An intense desire about or for something

**Meditation** –A state of intense focus. A practice of holy people or monks; One of the doors to enlightenment or total awareness of self

**Rocket Fuel** –Fuel that is used to shoot rockets into space; Motivation, Passion, Personal Power

#### **FOURTH DIMENSION**

**Dimension** –Another realm not detected by plain sight.

**Gravity** –A force that attracts all bodies or masses to the center of the earth.

**Atmosphere** –The air in any place, the space surrounding and enveloping earth or other planets.

**Acrylics and Oils** – Paints used to create works of art on canvass and other surfaces.

#### **A CHILD-LIKE WONDER**

**Higher Self** –The spiritual self, the true self; soul

**Horizon** –The skyline where the earth surface and the sky appear to blend into one another

**Aura** –The soul; the light around the heads of saints

**Spouting** –Water flowing out from a point, fountain-like

**Folklore** –Traditional beliefs and stories of a community, usually passed

down through spoken word and word  
of mouth

**Metaphor** –Used in poetry and other  
writings; A figure of speech where one  
idea is applied to an object or action of  
another idea to illustrate a point

**Dimming** –A light fading in  
brightness

**Waning** –To decrease in power, to  
become weaker

**Billowing** –A swell of some sort;  
smoke rolling out of a window of a  
burning building; outward and  
upward

**Idling** –Not in use; on standby, no  
motion

**Moonwalk** –Popular dance created in  
the 1980s by the late Michael Jackson

**Rain Dance** –A ritualistic dance done  
to summon rain

**Pele** –Hawaiian religion; the goddess  
of fire

**Thunder Gods** –A metaphor  
describing religions that use fear and  
intimidation to gain compliance from  
their followers

**Mystical** –Spiritual, religious,  
supernatural

**Myth** –Folk tale, story, legend.

**Water Walker** –One of the abilities of  
Jesus Christ

**Constellation** –A formation made up of stars forming some kind of mythological figure

**Miracles** –An unexplainable act or situation that defies science and the natural world

**Ambiance** –The character, feeling or personality of a place

**Wands** –A thin stick or rod possessing some sort of magical power

## **EPITOME OF IMPOSSIBLE**

**Statistics** –The science of collecting and analyzing data in large quantities

**Poverty** –The state of being poor

**Projects** –The ghetto

**Sobriety** – The state of being sober

**Epitome** – The perfect example of something

**Improbable** –Unlikely

**Comet** –A celestial object made up of dust and ice

**Cyclic** –Something that happens in cycles

**Kooky** –Crazy

**Psychic** –Telepathy or clairvoyance

**Hope** –A trust or expectation that something that you want to happen will in fact happen despite the apparent odds

**Analysis** –To examine something closely

**Dandy** –Excellent

**Shrouded** –Covered, cloaked

**Stark** –Sharply defined, clear

## **THE NINJA TURTLE POEM**

**Gutter** –Ghetto, drain, sewer

**Dawn** –Daybreak

**Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael,**

**Michelangelo** –The four great renaissance painters of the hit cartoon Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

**April O’Neil** –The News Reporter

**Shredder** –The Evil Villain

**Cutlery** –Cutting utensils

**Foot Clan** –Shredder’s army

**Bebops and Rocksteadys** –

Shredder’s minions, henchmen

**Re-animate** –Revive; bring back to life

**Master Splinter** –The father or mentor of the Ninja Turtles

**Mentor** –Guide, teacher, guru, counselor

**Manifested** –Reveal, show, display

**Ooze** –Seep, flow, trickle. Also, the green radioactive ooze that apparently transformed the Ninja Turtles into who they are

**Dank** –Damp

**Fiend** –A person extremely infatuated with something

**Mimic** –Copy, imitate

**Synthetic Polymer** –Plastic

**Villains** –The bad guys. Criminals

**Bastard** –A child born out of wedlock

**Dastardly** –Wicked

**Mutant** –Freak, monster

## CONFLICT

**Visionaries** –A person who thinks about and plans the future; a seer

**Papayas** –Tropical fruits, melons

**Cellars** –Rooms below ground to store wine

**Mass** –Holy Communion, Catholic worship

**Foresight** –The ability to predict the future

**Illuminates** –Lights up

**Foreshadows** –Warns of future events

**Robust** –Healthy, strong, vigorous

**Clad** –Clothed in

**Stucco** –Plaster used for coating architectural surfaces for decoration

**Iris** –The colored part of the eye

**Crow's-feet** –The hairline wrinkles near the outer sides of the eyes

**Perched** –A place where a bird has rested or sat, like a branch

**Gnarly** –Unattractive, rugged  
**Lilac** –A pale pinkish color  
**Vendor** –A trader in the street  
**Rosary** –A string of beads for keeping count of devotion  
**Bondage** –Being a slave  
**Goblet** –A drinking glass with a bowl-shape to it  
**Couplet** –Two lines of verse, usually in the same meter, joined by rhyme  
**Sonnet** –A poem of 14 lines using formal rhyme schemes  
**Molotov Cocktail** –A crude bomb made out of a vodka bottle and a fuse made from a cloth  
**Gnarled** –Rough and twisted  
**Protagonist** –The hero, the leading role in any story  
**Antithesis** –A person that is the direct opposite of another person  
**Subplot** –A side plot in a story  
**Green Thumb** –One’s natural ability to grow plants  
**Underbelly** –The soft white underside of an animal  
**Militia** –A military force of able-bodied citizens  
**Pruning** –To trim a shrub or bush

## FLOWERS FOR MONKS

**Infinity** –Forever

**Unfathomable** –Unthinkable,  
unimaginable

**Fathoms** –A measurement of depth

**Lotus** –A large white lily

**Mulching** –Decayed bark, leaves and  
other types of compost

**Donning** –Wearing clothing

**Betwixt** –Between

**Cacti** –Plural for cactus

**Carnations, Pansies, Orchids**–  
Flowers

**Lassos** –Ropes

**Subdued** –Quiet, depressed

**Gypsy** –Traveling person, a free-  
spirited person

**Wanderlust** –A person that has a  
strong passion to travel to various  
places

**Calla lily** –A cupped flower

**Meek** –Gentle, honest, humble

## THE DRUNKEN SUFI

**Sufi** –A Muslim Mystic

**Ferment** –Brew. Give rise to

**Vintage** –High-quality, superior

**Rumi** –A 13<sup>th</sup> Century Persian Poet

**Cleverness** –Intelligence, brightness,  
smarts

**Bewilderment** –Confusion

**Rupees** –The monetary unit of several Middle Eastern regions

**Awestruck** –To be filled with awe  
Amazed

**Sublime** –Beauty and great admiration

**Sprawl** –To stretch out

**Pawn** –Put in pawn, used as collateral on a loan

**Uncharted** –Unmapped

**Fat** –Substantial, generous, lucrative

**Kindling** –Something used to light or ignite

**Replete** –Full

**Bowlines** –Ropes attached to a boat

**Vessel** –A ship or boat

**Chandelier** –An extravagant hanging light fixture

**Chalice** –A large glass used for drinking wine

## LETTER TO LIAM

**Hyperventilating** –Breathing abnormally and at rapid rate

**Chanting** –Repeating rhythmic prayer that is sung by a person or a group of people

**Divine Hymn** –A religious song or poem of God or Gods

**Swoop** –To fly downward quickly

**Tannins** –Plant tissues and substances found in wines  
**Sulfur** –A nonmetallic element found in different places in nature. A pale yellow crystalline solid  
**Palate** –The roof of the mouth, the part that separates nose and mouth  
**Pelting** –Repeatedly hurling something  
**Linoleum** –A type of floor covering  
**Balthazar** –A large bottle of wine, the big guy  
**Krylon** –A brand of spray paint  
**Graffiti** –Writings or drawings on wall  
**Terrain** –Land or scene  
**Lush** –Bright, rich greenery

## I CRIED

**Chords** –A grouping of notes played together  
**Agonizing** –Causing great physical or mental pain  
**Ghost** –One’s own spirit. An apparition  
**Snake Charmed** –Charmed by a street performer who makes snakes dance by playing music  
**Drawn** –Pulled or dragged

**Atlantis** –A beautiful advanced civilization believed to have sunk into the sea

**Wept** –Cried

**Monsoon** –A very rainy season

**Capsized** –A boat that flips over in water

**Pontoon** –A type of boat

**Imbued** –Drenched

**Exalted** –Praised, worshipped, put on a pedestal

**Indigo** –Dark blue dye

**Somber** –Gloomy

**Koi Fish** –A bright orange fish of the carp family, bred in Japan

**Boisterously** –Noisy

**Dew** –Tiny drops of water

**Rambunctious** –Uncontrollable

**Typhoon** –A tropical storm

**Aquamarine** –A precious stone that is light bluish-green

**Wailed** –Cried loudly

**Poseidon** –The God of the Sea

**Gargantuan** –Enormous

**Third Eye** –Inner eye, spiritual eye, You

**Iris** –The colored part of one's eyes

**Subsided** –Calmed, relented, eased up

## TRAFFIC LIGHTS

**Quasar** –A massive celestial object that emits large amounts of energy such as a star

**Orbit** –The curved path of a celestial body such as star, planet and moon

**Cosmic** –Of or relating to the universe

**Havoc** –Destruction

## LIGHT

**Eon** –Long period of time

**Progeny** –Offspring

**Incandescent** –Glowing white with heat

**Aura** –The soul

**Chimerical** –Imaginary

**Prism** –Object that disperses light

**Zenith** –Point of the heavens directly over a person's head

**Phoenix** –Mythological bird that rose from its own ashes

**Encrusted** –Encased, outwardly covered

**Aesthetic** –Sensitive to beauty, philosophy of beauty

**Affluent** –Abundant, prosperous

**Reverie** –Lost in thought; dream

**Enamored** –In love

**Kiss** –When lips come together to separate bodies and merge the souls

**Shards** –Slivers of something broken into fine pieces

**Omni** –All

**Photosynthesis** –Process used by plants to convert sunlight into usable energy

**Catharsis** –Purging of emotions through expression

**Oolong** –A brown or black Asian tea

**Inundated** –Flooded

**Ambience** –Pervading atmosphere; mood

**Chrysalis** –Cocoon; metaphoric phase such as between caterpillar and butterfly

## FOREVER WAITING

**Illusive** –Deceptive

**Tethered** –Tied down as with a rope or chain

**Sundial** –An old clock used for telling the time of day by a marker that casts a shadow

**DeLorean** –The car used as a time machine in the movie *Back to the Future* starring Michael J. Fox

**North Star** –The brightest star in the sky, also known as Polaris

**Pegasus** –A mythological winged horse. A constellation  
**Primordial** –From the beginning of time  
**Choir** –A group of singers  
**NASA** –National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
**Papyrus Scrolls** –Ancient Egyptian material used as paper, rope and other materials  
**Carcass** –A dead animal body  
**Wading** –Walking through water

## **NEW WINE**

**Goose Ridge** –An area located in Eastern Washington’s wine country  
**Plodding** –Stomping, trampling  
**Gleaning** –Taking, drawing, extracting  
**Painstakingly** –Carefully, diligently  
**Granite** –A hard granular surface  
**Utterly** –Completely  
**Rapt** –Fascinated  
**Wine Skin** –An old wine container made from animal skin

## **ODE TO GRAPE**

**Bulbous** –Fat and bulging  
**Galaxy** –A system of billions of stars  
**Plump** –Chubby, fat, ample

**Pinot Noir** –A variety of grape, a black grape  
**Adore** –To love and respect something deeply  
**Gorgeous** –Beautiful  
**Drooping** –Hanging downward  
**Tulips** –Spring flowers  
**Pinot Gris** –A variety of grape, a green grape  
**Kismet** –Fate, destiny  
**Serendipity** –Coincidences of a beneficial nature  
**Migrant Workers** –Workers that move due to seasonal work  
**Pesos** –The currency of Mexico and other Latin American Countries  
**Cleavage** –The hollow space between a woman’s breasts  
**Scarlet** –A bright red color; immoral  
**Goddess** –A female deity  
**Marauding** –Looting  
**Merlot** –A grape variety, a black wine grape  
**Lingerie** –A woman’s undergarment  
**Climax** –An intense excitement; orgasm  
**Patter** –A continuous, light tapping sound.  
**Crimson** –A deep red color  
**Succubus** –A female demon  
**Jezebel** –An immoral woman  
**Hobos** –Homeless people

**Delicate** –Intricate, fragile  
**Mother Teresa** –Roman Catholic nun, known for her work with the poor  
**Mary Magdalene** –A follower of Jesus Christ; prostitute in the Holy Bible  
**Noble** –Righteous, virtuous, good  
**Serum** –A clear portion of any liquid that has been separated from its other solid elements  
**Sauvignon** –A grape variety, a green grape  
**Mystic** –A spiritual or religious person, paranormal, metaphysical  
**Summoned** –Sent for  
**Meek** –Tame, submissive, obedient  
**Placid** –Calm, serene, composed  
**Sacred** –Holy, blessed  
**Hallowed** –Holy, blessed, revered  
**Withering** –Becoming dried and shriveled  
**Asunder** –Divided into small parts and pieces

## **BEYOND THE CRUSH**

**Scantily-clad** –Insufficient clothing  
**Petit** –Small. A grape variety  
**Plains** –Prairies, country sides  
**Sleazy** –Immoral  
**Riesling** –White wine  
**Kama** –The God of Love

**Scarlet** –Bright red color, immoral woman  
**Starlet** –A young actress striving to become a star  
**Wallow** –To roll about, indulge in something  
**Thralls** –Being in someone’s power or having power over someone  
**Alsace** –A region in NE France  
**Pistil** –The female organs of a flower  
**En Fuego** –Hot, fire  
**Tango** –A Southern American ballroom dance  
**Sangria** –A Spanish red wine  
**Decant** –To pour wine into another container to allow oxygen to open up the wine so that flavors and aromas escape  
**Kerosene** –Fuel, a characteristic often detected in Rieslings  
**Canteen** –A small water bottle  
**Maverick** –An independent thinker  
**Noble Rot** –A deliberate process in grape production that enhances certain characteristics in wine  
**Constance** –A place in Germany  
**Spasm** –An involuntary muscle convulsion  
**Double entendre** –A word or phrase that has double meanings  
**Mantra** –A phrase or word repeated over and over in prayer or meditation.

**Frank Sinatra** –Singer and Actor  
**Brut** –A Dry Champagne  
**Tussling** –Struggling or scuffling

## MOONSHINE

**Surveillance** –Close observation,  
security watch  
**Corona** –A visible gaseous ring  
around the Sun or Moon  
**Splayed** –Spread out  
**Nab** –To steal

## SHE'S FLY

**Raphael Santi** –A great Italian  
painter from the Renaissance era  
**Michelangelo** –A great Italian  
painter from the renaissance era  
**Unison** –In harmony  
**Pollinating** –Fertilizing a flower  
**Transparent** –See-through  
**Watts** –Units of power  
**Levitating** –Floating in mid-air  
**Gallops** –Sprints in a trotting motion  
**Crept** –Advanced to a point slowly  
**Sever** –To cut off  
**Unfurl** –To spread one's wings

## WORKIN' MY WAY UP

**Stiletto** –High heels

**Harem** –Women's quarters, a place for concubines to work

**Harlots** –Immoral women, prostitutes

**Smother** –To suffocate

**Fondue** –A dish where bite-sized foods are dipped into a sauce

**Sedate** –To calm or dull

**Kama Sutra** –Art of love and sexual techniques

**Studious** –Spending a lot of time studying

**Prude** –A person who is extremely shy when it comes to the subject of sex

**Prudence** –Caution, care about one's plans for the future

**Mosh Pit** –A style of dance found in front stage at rock concerts

**Sake Bomb** –Sake is a Japanese Rice wine, Sake Bomb is a drink served at some bars and night clubs

**Mirage** –Optical illusion

**Inny** –A belly button that sticks out rather than in

**Shawshank** –Referencing the hit movie *The Shawshank Redemption*

**Warden** –The head supervisor of a prison

**Extorting** –Obtaining something by force or threat usually money

**Che** –A revolutionary, Guerilla leader  
**Ghetto Blaster** –A large stereo that  
was often the main source of  
entertainment in some urban  
neighborhoods in the 1970s and 1980s  
**Steep** –To soak  
**Atomic** –Relating to atoms or the  
atom bomb

## **FORTUNE**

**Deserted** –To be stranded  
**Vow** –To promise  
**Honor** –Respect  
**Sustenance** –Nourishment  
**Grand** –Magnificent  
**Grandeur** –Magnificence  
**Indigence** –Poverty  
**Firearms** –Guns, weapons  
**Ornament** –Trinket, doodad  
**Solar plexus** –The nerves meeting  
between the stomach and heart; one's  
guts

## **ANOTHER GIGANTIC DREAM**

**Recurring** –Happening over and over  
again.  
**Colossal** –Gigantic, very large  
**Cypress** –An evergreen tree  
**Pygmy** –Very short people of an  
African tribe

## THE ICARUS ODE

**Icarus** –Mythological character. Had wings made from wax and feathers. He was warned by his father not to fly too close to the sun or his wings would melt off.

**Grizzly** –A large bear

**Defy** –Refuse to obey

**Crane** –Stretch out one's own neck

**Idling** –Inactive, on standby

**Chakra** –A center on the body with spiritual power

**Nike Swoosh** –The branding of Nike

**Aviator Cap** –A pilot's hat

**Manifest** –To show or reveal something

**Chemtrails** –The long smoke trails that jets leave behind in the sky

**Dissipate** –Evaporate

**Borne** –Carried or transported by something

**Khalil Gibran** –Poet, writer and artist

**Messiah** –A savior

**Pulley** –A wheel-type mechanism

**Piston** –A valve of an engine

**Tarp** –A sheet or cover

**Sheer** –Pure

**Will** –Determination, mind power

**Pulsing** –Heartbeat

**Propellers** –Spinning blades of a helicopter or jet engine

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# Thank You!

## **BOOK JORDAN CHANEY**

Jordan Chaney  
is available for booking.

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