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Cannibal Run

By

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Cannibal Run

1

Blood Thick It’s Sorrow To Move

which of course doesn’t.

How can it when that

man in uniform

comes to stay without

an invitation, an apparition emerging from desert heat,

honey and wild bees, dung and dry blood

on crustaceous rock..

On her thirteenth birthday she stands half naked in their

vegetable patch, her fathers phantom finally eviscerated.

At dawn

a boat sails through cresting heat,

a Noah’s arc for desert spiders, wolf and sagebrush,

its dust settling on thin eyelashes,

that man in uniform mapping out

flat land, mountain peaks, bald eagles and one mule

with deformed knees

to carry the family towards Santa Rosa.

It seems their solitude is enough.

It heals, maps out a future for these desert wanderers

waiting now for sand and stone to embolden, for their

fathers demons to congeal in sand and distant palm;

lighter now than those night vultures silent in their sway.

Cannibal Run

2

Praising Heathen Carrion

Huddled on this mountainside

a skinned camouflaged town

witness to bark unfolding

between centuries of sagebrush and spider web,

witness to thistle barley that once fed

herds, tribes, communes somber and bold,

regurgitating history as forgiveness,

as sustenance once fed by supple children.

The sun settles its real estate,

its velvet rays sliced

by snake worn trees,

by mansion gates slowly closing

to the four faces of evil,

presenting themselves

as cut caribou rattling their shiny bones,

trailing the day in memory

to dead wood,

seed lust

covered by leaves infested.

Sleep befuddles.

Peace flows as green rivers haunting,

nerve and fiber mixing violently with the fox,

rattler and low snaked lizards

shuffling and slithering into consciousness,

bearded lice infested tribesmen

praising heathen carrion, pummeled be-headers,

steaming cow dung.

Cannibal Run

3

Coal Miner’s Son

Testament to deep rivers, to silent bridges yearning

for reconstruction, low clouds the color of blue and

black pain; the signature of angels in velvet stained

overcoats.

Fugitive this race of seasons, swallowing whole

snow covered rocks and trees, monster homes built

on impenetrable foundations, local hospitals that have

forgotten how to heal, ingesting rising percentages,

disinformation, the mother lode, blue and purple hues

that so soon become extinct.

A blinding sun rises swollen over steaming hills and

vacant homes, the maddening waltz of chains already

boring into veins of sadness.

Every day the same swirl of air, the same sightless

lanterns propelled by masses of black dwarfs splayed

upon rocks of faith, fault lines etched forever into

ghoulish faces, no stars to kiss the seamless velvet

underground.

Cannibal Run

4

Shanghai Coast

Still peace riding coastal highway orange moon

to follow, sipping spiked coffee and feeling elevator,

wearing my padded Mao jacket,

grateful to be losing my sense of sensing.

Numbness sweetens my coffee, rises

into the ongoing constancy of dreaming.

Too numb for words

this roundhouse jack in the box.

A rain too dark to see into.

Its syntax marking time.

Marking time with endless rice paddies,

pan-tiled roofs, iron kettles thrust from

windows. How nice to finally bid farewell to big

bellied plaster Buddha’s, latex thongs, laminated

photos of Asian music stars.

Time. Trying to befriend it.

Time like liquid chocolate.

A velvet underground this secret place.

Midnight picnics on a grain of sand, objects passing

by chiming thoughtless, arguments always in motion.

It seems silly to barter for pieces

of celluloid meaning, eyelids flickering in the lit overdose,

falling and rising to gleam clean all obscurity.

Cannibal Run

5

New York

(One Day Before 9/11)

Displaced molecules in an instant of silence, yet I

could hear the world spinning on its axis, my blood

kissing the night sky, an enigma of space measured

step by step, slowing down to embrace poisonous

mutations, the cinema of night air propelling the

strange zeppelin just inches above beer bottles and

used condoms.

Rising and thundering along endless streets with

nothing but rows of shopkeepers, tourists, ragged

men and card playing gun toting crazies, a black

face and gun pointing at my genitals. I saw only

the closed fist and truth knotted up like the

shimmering resonance of the hotel lobby, where

earlier I had scooped out a living fly in my soup.

We had laughed then. Now the hotel room aflame

with white light. I grabbed what I needed, my blood

so loud I thought I would bloody the entire room,

but my gnarled thought was only for speed.

Port Authority Bus Terminal. A confusion of tongues

and cultures. Intercom announcements. Styrofoam

coffee cups. Cigarette smoke. Schizophrenics gargling

at the skylights. In the cafeteria what grows into the

body is revenge, a DNA linkage of little white pills

that I keep ingesting, thinking they are just not

reaching my bloodstream fast enough.

On a bench a copy of “The Watch Tower,” pro-

claiming, “The chariots shall rage in the streets, they

shall jostle each other on the broad miles.”

Cannibal Run

6

New York

(One day before 9/11)

A guttural throbbing sound, my mother swooning

martyrdom, my stepfathers fists so large they got

caught in my rib cage, unaware that I too could

close my hands and bring blood to the surface. In

my fortress of pain the the innocence of a child, the

violence and cruelty of an ancient forest plagued

with immense spiked boulders that were too heavy

to bear, my sister kneeling at my spire spurting a

cool moon for my departure, a frosted glass pane on

the bus pulling in the cold night; sitting up front with

a muscular ex-marine still in uniform.

A blind chill talking about descending bombs of

crimson city light. He was both adversary and patriot

patriot. Blood knows blood, the road ahead ash white.

Canada the only safe haven. America gone down the

toilet. King Kong and The World Trade Center light

years to touch home.

Cannibal Run

7

Wishing Tree

A yearning that never diminishes. A

constancy that frightens, weighs heavily,

sighs lightly as fall leaves resist this rapt

and silent yearning, so imminent it is like

watching my own death.

What will it be like when every word

ever written no longer feeds the

beggars at the feast of words, when

a word like yearning will have no currency,

will no longer be able feed the bones that

nourish your spirit.

Memory that says yes. Another life

that says no. I have always been a black

line riding an expanse of grey.

Stern and hollow eyed I look down at

my wishing tree. Hard, rich oak, maple

leaves turning indistinct in the whitish sky.

The corner of a page speared through the

tip of a small branch rustles among

the leaves as if the tree were breathing to me

its acquiescence; its hard, tearless answer.

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8

A Small Sickness

Shredded skirts burn colorful

under an African sky, so too satin purple

socks, flies devouring tainted meat,

eyelid sockets and tongues white with fever.

Yesterdays stutter challenges the almighty

nothing, and still you can’t sleep in cloth tents

where parasites flourish.

In jungles loincloths are worn.

In cities subway riders belch fashion day and night.

They call it free expression, screeching at an

audience that begs abuse.

A man stands on the curb of Queen and Jarvis,

clad only in shoes and socks, masturbating

leisurely; a small sickness singing night songs

to the early morning stars.

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9

Trains and Love

Eyes dim frictionless, quick

glances pretending interest in

barren trees, rafts skittering

green needles penetrating

white marble like coming home,

stranger to body rhythms rocking

a thousand thunders recanting

sweet Mary’s and O mother

of god, endless tracks glimmering

aisles dimming memory of black

high heels tapping desire across

crowded parking lots, eyes

straining into lit windows for

strange passions, the scientist,

carpenter, steel worker igniting

this faithless strange love.

Trains and love.

The constant waiting to arrive at

her door to breathe flesh.

She asked what it is I do, babbled

courteously, apologized and left.

I couldn’t bring her back. The

dimming light wasn’t strong

enough. Deeper the snow now

melting on my lap. She came and

drank toxic water. “Man wasn’t

meant to eat meat.”I told her

I knew that the lightest hour

is the next train, the next dream.

She left. I played my harmonica to

bring her back. Celluloid sentiment

used to work, now it’s too late.

Trains and love.

Cannibal Run

10

Trains and Love

Always too late, like never

giving blood-is it safe?

I told her. She didn’t believe me,

slapped my cheek and told me the

seat was impregnating her. I thought

it might have been the man in

the sci-fi movie climbing circular

stairs. They hid in oil tanks, then

again it might have been the

conductor doing a bad impersonation

of Rod Serling, love on a train

on a carbon ribbon these

evanescent creatures their

accusing gnome lights altering

chemistry is what makes it work.

I wanted to kiss her like a child,

tweak her nipples like a grown man.

She said I could, then screamed

rape holding limp conscience.

Trains and love.

She escaped just in time, waiting

for a miracle at four in the morning,

safe guarding this gash in my side.

I was trying hard not to knock over

plastic cups, knowing not the hour.

There she stands alone on the porch,

waving, holding hands with the sodium

light. She beckoned. I tried to hold her

but the dimming light wasn’t strong

enough.

Trains and love.

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11

Trains and Love

Rambling on like these parallel

runners dancing primitive. Look

for me, she said, between white tents

feeding birds, real my flesh, ethereal

my sound.

Smiling, she took my voice and sold

it for ten bucks

I tried to buy it back, peace and chance

like trains and love.

I touched her tongue. It snaked deep.

Cannibal Run

12

Nothing The Way It Used To Be

Breakfast in your hair,

you already gave to the

sperm bank, to those

three sisters of charity,

your eyes nourishment

for all, writing out checks

for promises on a nuclear

island, lunch times spent

digesting faithless machinery

in dead end deals. You rise

and fall away, a camera angle

shattering glass, sitting there

all flesh and bone on that

leather chair shifting slowly

to the ground.

Accelerating backwards

the jackhammer penis

bloodies the green grass,

an endless shuddering implosion

on the tail end of a comet.

Meals sprinkled with the dust

of grace pierce like bullets

the stupid faces.

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13

Crescendo # 8

Gingered swallowing in

swirling currents, inert

motion to modern ruins,

a strumming of savants

playing at their genitals,

the obsessed crawling

from wet chords blasting

hard grunts, crows

spurting dark semen into

poisonous wombs,

headlights moaning,

churning, bumping and

grinding at street corners

altering dispassionate

internal alarms

reproducing melancholy

violins, parched voices

desiccated, howling at

numbed egos, luminous

cinnamon fools cloaked

in decency, plunging

heavens saintly preserve.

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14

Deeper And Deadlier

Cobblestoned pain humbles along

pre-dawn rivers, flows past

plastic and iron,

past the fire pots of Olympia.

Fifteen gusts swirl above

green blighted leaves, roads littered

with red dust,

slivered with fireflies that die slowly,

blessing the rising sun.

Army tanks barricade wired fences,

hollow eyed with sentries

clutching coffee cold hands.

A small blinkered moment swoons

slowly with dreams of a morning

shift gone with narcotic roaming.

No one feeds the sleepless,

kneels hungry before

the cardboard gods or throws crusts

of bread to the iron churches.

An old man with bits of asphalt

on his face buys a coffee.

The witch in the river

sings for the men to forget with a

voice more grating than the sounds of their

occupiers, meaning

and lost beauty inflamed

in the genocide of a scorched earth policy.

Deeper and deadlier the bright light.

Deeper and deadlier the fact and fiction

on the sidewalks. In the

fullness time consumes the fire.

Shifts soundlessly. In

evening shades the forced marches.

Dried out drones measured in miles.

Cannibal Run

15

The Hindu Kush

Die a thousand deaths,

the man said.

I counted 999 sentimentalized,

compartmentalized,

serialized vessels

inhaling blood over chaffed lips,

sophisticated cutlery severing

umbilical confusions

so mystifying,

stultifying, as I float in other

bodies not meant to touch terra firma,

concrete objects

swaying imperceptibly

from doubting complexities, a cryptic altar,

therefore it must be I, crazy insane

to mock it on a

frigid winters eve

forever paddling upstream in this strange

place we call home, acuity so clear

the icicle breaks without sound,

barely audible whispers tormenting

defenseless frozen fingers stabbing upward at

that saintly halo, that crucifixion

of tears helping

too late the after death of hope,

the plaintive no somewhere in the yes, yes, yes

of that final

awakening, snowflakes specks of wheezing

windblown moments

to ease the absence of pain.

Cannibal Run

16

This Will Come To Pass

The most likely scenario is this. The world

will be destroyed by a man of short stature.

This probability has been officially

researched for years.

For centuries the world has produced

machismo, womanizing little men;

Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Pepin the short.

There will always be a new generation of

such men, like the new leader of a nation

recently included in the axis of evil.

This man likes to totter in high heeled Cuban

boots, wear his hair Elvis Presley Style,

and idolizes Clint Eastwood..

If he didn’t have a nuclear arsenal

no one would be too afraid of this little man.

So there you have it. Power makes right,

especially in the hands of a jockey sized general.

Yes indeed, the world will be destroyed

by a short, power hungry, infantile sensualist.

Cannibal Run

17

Somewhere In Saint John

We are fuel for the light, shaking trembling

bits of feeling.

Odd these creatures that walk fearless,

inhale radioactive and shrug at all the work

to be done. We are fuel for the afterlife,

a muddled flushing stillness this slow

winding river. Naked and shaved clean

the smooth cliff rising without design.

Silence that is maddening, threatening.

The thought of polished bone, flutes,

and little white pills. Neil Armstrong stepping onto the powdery surface

of the moon.

Army helicopters appear. Angry cold

metal that repeats endlessly. It is comforting,

this sudden confusion, this drugged bitterness,

this alien landscape. I am fearless, numb,

surprised at my fascination.

We are fuel for all that we call mind.

We wake in blinkered nights, our faculties

misplaced.

Burned in the ether.

Cannibal Run

18

Listen

Psychosis is what comes to mind.

No, not mine. Listen

Now there’s a strange word.

We use it every day, don’t we.

In families. Court rooms.

Hospitals. Under bed sheets.

Listen.

Do you hear me yet?

Am I shouting yet?

Sparks about to break from shadows

running green he’s got black eyes

and a drop dead heart.

Oh yes, there were nights curdling

sour, kitchen knifes

wired to a head on with dynamite.

Listen. That word again.

Cannibal Run

19

Psych Ward

(1969)

Walking with that terror at my heels, I was

looking for a smile from someone alive,

from someone far away,

from ticking clocks in the houses of the dead,

sinking into tar filled sidewalks trying to forget

the slap on the face, the bed wetting, my mother thudding

down basement stairs like a large whirligig, in the hospital

their faces unmerciful, in the car wanting

to open the door and gently roll along the highway

like a deflated basketball.

I believed it all, looking ahead at unemployed days,

at endless re-awakenings, at rock sculpture come alive,

at an endless crib of dreams.

Cannibal Run

20

Nova Scotia

The constant gray of the open road

consorts with instants of time.

Solitary crow.

Beer bottles.

Upright raccoons.

Blonds passing in

red sports cars. Panties and boxer shorts.

A land of saints for this

razor bleeding hillside.

Time well spent

watching gold- trimmed medians,

cardboard resistance

to pelting rain, mountains

sledge- hammering into checkerboard fields

redolent with Virgin Mary’s and red farmhouses.

Broken red tricycles in dirty ditches.

Cannibal Run

21

Awakening

Time is slow. It weighs heavily, like the miasma

all hospital rooms seem to produce.

“Death be not proud.” John Donne and his angelic host.

Death is proud, needy, commanding respect, shrouding

a paralyzed cadaverous body like a prized possession.

One comes to the conclusion that everything

worth living is not, especially health care professionals

and those specialists who do their daily rounds etiolated,

subliminal, in extremis.

Imagine a knotted grimace, feet as soft as swallows,

white tightened sleeves and tight filled aspirations.

Suffering is contractive, unintelligible, maddening.

Strange, those lidless fish.

Lidless fish, and that constant hypnotizing drip.

Cannibal Run

22

The Windows Were Closed

He used his belt like a lasso, flicking it artfully at exposed skin.

The pain was intense, a blue tipped fire racing like lines of lit gasoline.

My mother was mute to it all.

In the morning I sat on the front porch with her, but I had to stand several

times to relieve the pain. Large, blackish welts had developed. She did her

best to try to explain to me what it was my stepfather was trying to teach me.

I couldn’t help but wonder what my next punishment would be for, and then,

as I was preparing to stand, I tried to imagine what he was supposedly

teaching my mother, who was slowly turning into a violent, middle aged woman.

Gone was the smiling mother who had once showered me with kisses.

Cannibal Run

23

Pills On A Table

They stand there, beckoning.

I resist, tell myself it is an illusion,

that life without them

would be just fine, thank you,

equanimity in every pore, critical

of the crutch

she uses,

but I am more cruel, distempered ,

weak from so much need, her faith a reflection

in the reflection

of my glasses; eyes deceiving perspective,

the minds burning rage

focused on those pills,

those bastard pills

so easily

offering up their release.

Time curves the mind; sprouts knives.

I taste the drug gone sour

on lips and tongue,

testicles tingling like static parchment;

throw sound waves

into the air,

hurdle choice epithets.

No one escapes,

not the burning bush, science, family,

not even crucifixes tattooed

on chest and fingers.

What is said is not by me.

Cannibal Run

24

My Hollow Backyard

A fog grew in my hollow backyard.

It has lingered many years.

It has the fragrance of dryness,

the sense of growing,

and the feeling of one man trying

to fill the space, pushing the

nearby nothingness over a wider area,

the all echoing silence resonating and

throbbing, a lone cricket trilling till the

uncut grass sways to its rhythm.

Cannibal Run

25

I Wanted to Bleed like a Woman.

What does a man know about blood?

Only that which he kills, between winter

and spring, impulse and desire,

thought and action idiotic manifestations of

cartoon reality, enduring time, wound, wave

and perception; enduring passages, numbness,

eyes that grow further back in the skull.

We men love bodies, not minds,

smooth rounded milk white nourishment

sucking wombs orgasmic to stay the

nothingness, the

decay, the paper weight barriers.

We barter for pieces of celluloid meaning, for

agreements misunderstood, for arrangements

made due to changing circumstances; fixing

deals that have to be made.

I endured her pain,

crying without sound for the Messiah I knew

sang in her heart, ignoring the caskets

in the driveway.

Cannibal Run

26

Cannibal Run

I ate the last atom,

their seamless eyes

protein to frigid

blood on lips.

Begging forgiveness

they had none, only

accusation until

the howling snow

covered their skulls. I

wanted to erect a twig,

plant a scarf, name a

street, take shelter

in the atom.

Father, I knew what

I was doing, forgive me,

he slapped both cheeks,

told me to wipe the

blood from my nose

and pray to the Virgin

Mary. I spat on the cross

and made love to her.

Surely she would

sprinkle me with

grace, and still there was

no answer, no calling

in the clearing, only those

skulls buried in snow

betraying belief in the

kingdom come.

They wore

their white gloves to

twist in the thorn, all

but one, and he remained

silent as vinegar stung

hands and feet, running,

running

on rusted nails

standing dumb.

Cannibal Run

27

Cannibal Run

I cowered and cried

without sound, screeching

wounds testament to the

darkened heart, a

frozen face of fear

running black top

caskets, graven images

in cut glass no

prodigal son father

to the driving rain,

running

circles

around steam trains

and seven monuments

buried as light as

those seven skulls.

I drank deep the poison

there and was reborn, running.

Yes father, I will do as you ask

and expect nothing

in return

Your hands are steel.

They crack stainless.

Hungry child I run

hanging onto wishes

under a cloudless sky,

gentle winds ruffling

gauze curtains and

feathers dying like

dreams running

to the other

side, hope the greatest

drug, faith for the

sons of pain running naked.

Cannibal Run

28

Cannibal Run

He saw me coming

in the distance,

arms held open

and I believed they

would stay open.

Father, why

the enduring

shadow carved in hatred.

I ran running

out beyond the river.

Odd these creatures that

bury themselves in

shallow earth and pray,

running faster, deeper, into

salvations comfort,

cured

of all dreams

running

razor gauntlets, my

disease

a running sore.

You bastard,

why did you die on

that hospital bed,

your seamless eyes

begging me to get you

out. I had nothing

to mourn. Hear

my heartbeat

running,

running to hold

little arms and legs

that trusted your

quickening sand

in the hourglass.

Cannibal Run

29

Cannibal Run

I mailed you letter

bombs, ran in the

still street,

withdrew my

painted face

from the bedroom

window, each cricket

so luminous I fell

radioactive and ran

running to

idling metal,

pretending I wasn’t

there.

I was always too

young to hurt.

Your fists became numb.

I ate them whole

to preserve the

un-kept promises.

Cannibal Run

30

Sisyphus And His Salvation Army

Bones twisted and circling

gouged out flaps of flesh. In

the old mans lining a piece of the scanner.

Blanked out nerves cut, rewired, brimming

aimless rage,

rising and then falling

into that big space,

falling on that same

self serving knife, too numb for words, a

roundhouse jack in the box under an unshaved chin.

Cannibal Run

31

Werewolves Brooding

Licking blood hot toast

sprinkled with grace,

white rubber

gloves to penetrate

in cut glass

standing dumb

and mute; happy

testament to the darkened heart.

An enduring shadow,

fearing the

space between

but bravely, savagely,

siphoning as much rage and

anger as I could from

that rising arc of madness

that never listened but

was keen to roar.

At night licking blood hot toast

and swirling,

swirling heatedly lest he think

of a reason

to enter my room.

Cannibal Run

32

Cathedral

In the cathedral

I sang angrily to glass stained windows

that etched their colors onto Christ’s

sorrowful wooden face.

Outside, a blood red sky

stabbed arrows of light strong enough

to pierce the ceiling, one lone bird

fluttering angrily on wooden beams.

I thought of my holy

communion,

nuns huddling

and smiling constantly

at their new converts.

I tried hard to impress.

Every Easter

a passion play as brutal as the one

in our home, locked in a slanted orbit,

entrenched as those ponderous

church gargoyles.

This was our stepfathers

idea of tradition.

Don’t look away, he would say,

his mouth hard,

his spittle a venom

without cure, and always,

always the sign of the cross,

alien and somehow defiling.

Cannibal Run

33

Cathedral

There had been so many memories

reluctantly stored in cathedrals.

Baby baptisms.

Godfather ceremonies.

Tony Sacha

who heard voices

and hung himself on his wedding night.

In the church.

Take this bread. This wine.

Your death is not what we mourn.

It is the world you left behind.

Darker our stepfathers silk suit,

his stern pale face a useless barometer.

Outside, the crunching of Autumn leaves,

the screeching noise of tires

and then the jolting sound

of impacting metal.

I look up at Christ’s fixed face.

Turn to me, I hear

Him say.

Turn and drink,

or look away,

and never more think of me.

Cannibal Run

34

The Well Fed Beast And The Starving Boy

Plastic flowers on windowsills for the

eternally faithful cheerful ones vomiting

tongue and cheek, chaos consecrated in

cement. I was one of those destined to

implode. Vibrators in the shape of nuclear

warheads. Damn the torpedoes, the dead

headings, that large knotted heart tearing

at gorged wood.

A tangled grace butter up your tongue,

with Jesus standing on a sinking mound

taken in by the victim world, marrying

language to the tin can man and those rolling

hills covered in suicide. A wine snaked

tenderness it crawls on your belly, beating

the self out of the self, eyes recoiling at

the sight of that large growth on your groin.

Recoiling from the well fed beast and the

starving boy.

Cannibal Run

35

March

Incessant screeching metal

so maddening I want to impale

myself upon it..

Clotheslines flapping secrets.

They know I want to share them.

Toy clowns perched on

windowsills, faces turned inward.

That motor-less dodge pick-up

on concrete blocks

inflicting dread and desire.

And Tartan, our large Scottish

Terrier, somehow making the day

bearable, plopping his shit on the

still brown gasping grass.

Cannibal Run

36

Mirror

My daughter is turning twelve.

She sits in front of her mirror

painting her fingernails.

She looks up at me, smiling.

I hesitate, wondering how

I can teach her, when the time comes,

to be human without it destroying her.

Love? It is not enough.

Marriage? Most don’t last.

Belief in a kingdom come?

I will say this to her;

be ruthless when you have to,

tell the truth when you have to,

and put no loyalties in mirrors.

Cannibal Run

37

Twilights Gleaming

It is not possible. Even God was betrayed,

beyond satellite dishes, across aerial thickets

lit by an old moon.

Tacitus stands humbly in the hearts last

gleaming, in blue shadows and purple woods.

Adler’s, willows, aspen brave the blighted bank,

that near distant train as drunk slow as the

crickets trilling, leaves singed by an early

morning frost.

Wisps of tyranny is enough

Wisps of hair caught in brambles is enough.

We bleat like barnyard sheep, offering ourselves

to a deity seen in seasons of love, fought for in

altered states.

Cannibal Run

38

Family

In all this melancholy

a hardness so cold it

strangles all who step

in its path. With two exceptions.

My eight year old

daughter tells me

camp jokes as crude as

the feelings kept locked

in a slanted orbit.

My wife’s savior is her

keeper. I am her jailor

jangling combinations.

She is an excellent scrabble player.

Cannibal Run

39

Nuclear Iran

Initiative requires ambition.

Nothing is value free.

Water and sky overlook the abyss.

Distinction comes in the form of

gargantuan coffins anchored like

steel rods in a thermonuclear

cooling system.

There is no remorse.

Lesions decompose, melt ambiguous

on this tough leathered skin.

Seams wrinkle, mutate, contract under

hazel eyes, each synapse firing prematurely

a hundred million times a second, as voluble

as lightning.

Cannibal Run

40

Flying Deeper

into this thing we call life,

into the flesh of faces

slowly dripping time,

a virtual reality as

as truthful as computerized

death, futuristic test sites

ravenous for creation.

Deeper into nuclear reactors,

plutonium will survive

longer than the human

heart, exhaling the peaceful

atom. It will deliver freedom

and commerce at the cost of

a country.

Deeper still the moon rises

ignorant, a bronchial buster,

a murderous delight drifting

past clouds of malice.

The world emerges weeping,

a black stream of countered

shop windows. The earth

invests in crimson dawns,

in that instant of motion we

nourish over and over again

as children lost.

Cannibal Run

41

Goodyear Man

Tomorrow

watch the journalist

politician

run after the latest sports figure,

sex scandal,

double triple

bypass murder.

They want to turn you on.

Tomorrow

watch the lawyer

auditor

run after the latest gaffe,

major embarrassment,

princely nakedness and

impregnated aliens.

They want only to turn you on.

Tomorrow

watch the US of A

run all over the world

like a 14 year old boy begging for respect,

denying its

institutionalized

adolescence.

It wants to turn you on

to sustainable growth,

to the rot of spiritual values,

to silos screaming silent suicide

and to all the poverty, violence and filth

you can possibly compute.

Cannibal Run

42

Fort Garry Hotel

How absurd, to be rationing little white pills on a black

counter top, yet somehow so comforting, hypnotic, like

the days fixed wheat fields drained of all color.

Strange, now, to remember the feel of your little ridged

toe. The way you tense. Squeeze your fingers. Under

deep salt water you got sick, with no one to help but the

man on the boat. Talking and laughing and never once

looking my way.

Odd, to recall how the web spider dies attached to its

mate, eaten after intercourse-William Burroughs and his

extra sensory perceptions. Damn those little white pills.

Too easy to rationalize the need, analyze the triteness.

What we don’t know is why wheat fields have no color,

why the female spider eats it mate after intercourse,

or why I will soon be driving under the shadow of so

many luminous mountains.

Cannibal Run

43

Heavy Those Howling Winds

Come and gone the

last train of doubt,

the last bit of hunger

in this strange country.

The greatest gift is gold,

pots raging under furious

flame.

See our naked daughters,

their silence grasping,

seizing.

You offer them

your meager cup of water.

They throw it back.

Kneel on grapefruit knees.

Dodge oozing body fluids.

Cry tearless.

Heavy those howling winds.

Heavy those hardened hands

that once cradled love.

On street corners,

mothers disappear.

Cannibal Run

44

G.V.C.

Eyes weary of unspoken truths.

A perpetual buzz under the skin.

Time.

Trying to make friends with it.

Time like liquid chocolate in the darkening evening.

A velvet underground this special place.

My faith is suspect.

I crawl from a hole in the ice.

Fall from the edge of my G. V. C.

It has a calming effect.

Alone and brimming with sightless vision.

A mass of feeling under the gun.

Cannibal Run

45

9/11

Watching

concrete octagons

staring down

wheelchair ramparts.

White vertical blinds

withdrawing love,

humor, wide eyed

innocence.

Snow singed lunar.

Gray office towers

umbrella to ultra violet

sunlight.

Pedestrians wading

lecherous, leaden icons

pressed tightly against

rigid bodies.

Our sins are illusions.

They are the things we go

back to, places

so full of terror they easily

find the waiting enemy.

Cannibal Run

46

The New Israel

The new Messiah is global. He lives in your TV

set, in your Internet; between sound bytes.

There are no new Jerusalem’s. No new Bethlehem’s.

She gazes at the whirling cinder from her rooftop,

believing the mystery to be revealed. Swollen

fingers grasp at the salvation offered.

She feels cured now of all disease.

No longer those technological toys.She takes

instead the swirling cinder, swirling within her own

whirlwind of dust and sand, free of all thought, sex,

and displaced Messiahs.

Beware. Today, only Jesus sings the blues.

Cannibal Run

47

Sally Ann

Streetcars on narrow avenues spraying electrical

sparks, distraction for hunched men in Timmy’s.

Nothing can be given back, certified and cruel in

the cross lights, desire worn on thick shirt sleeves,

hands interlocked in dire configurations.

Concealed chemical dreams remain stuck in ancient

smoldering smoke. Doors remain open, gutter noises

hack sawing gun shots, an unending tyranny of faith

always there in those armies of salvation, in their

bloodless sanctuaries.

Adulation, copulation on beds inches from un-swept

floors; pull chain light bulbs buzzing as strong as rain

bursts, thunderous night clouds resounding in boot

worn halls. There is no remorse, just a violence of

wanting and used condoms in communal bathrooms.

Tears stored in canteens, he swallows, pissing blood.

Cannibal Run

48

The Giant Dreaming Self

Militant walking sticks

on evening roads

trounce indifference,

rage

at plundered villagers,

racist bible thumpers

reducing passion to violence,

salvation

to last rites of pleasure

stabbed in clear eyed vision.

A close cropped skeletal

intolerance.

A white blue eyed Jesus

commandeering

vegetable obedience,

learning to

forget in deadly

ideologies,

in tanks,

children without arms

sitting bravely

in cratered classrooms.

Watch as they reinvent

language, sacraments,

feral beauty in which to

name our angels and devils

in the giant dreaming self.

Cannibal Run

49

Winter in Montreal

Vision like cut glass, McGill

cleaving dispassionate above epicurean pursuit,

hibernating thought

spent in

synchronized libraries wondering where all the shit goes.

Time enough

for reproducing melancholy violins, accompaniment

to virtuous leaps

sipping

Canadian Sherry.

On Crescent Avenue

glittering porches, limousine

men fueling neon reverence

snorting capital diversions,

stabling mercurial egos

scattering like wisps of pressing

snow lingering

on numb

excited fingers,

snapping swallowing

dry moist

resolution,

luminous cinnamon fools

cloaked in decency while wino’s

piss in the

alleyways of Saint Laurent.

Cannibal Run

50

In the hotel lobby

a pink flamingo,

one lucid orb

dimmed

with drunken fear,

white wine

silvery hollow

tears tinkling atonement

for one mutant snowflake,

survival tormenting

polluted philosophies

plunging heavens preserve.

Old lady said the

worlds going to end soon,

don’t you know,

thank you dear, yes,

I saw the greatest story ever told.

Who was it that said

the medium

is money

for Gods sake,

sitting here

dreaming of the Jezebel,

doves swooping down arrows

in their dusky falling.

Appaloosa

sleep,

dream of

Godless tyrants

in the eternal wounding.

Cannibal Run

51

Saint John

Lovers faces drift into the rip tide, their dampened

voices tunneling into the harbors mouth, its wet soil

the leavings of a dried up canvass.

There is no judgment.

No sentence.

We all harbor safe recollections on dangerous shores.

Shawls weave towards the sea strand where large

gulls fly skies the color of gray, deepening

like the slow descent of the sleeping pill.

Limpets over ripe, sponge in the dim sunlight,

while noisy Jeremiah’s crank open

crab cages smelling of the blood of all the young

men that have died.

Ring the bell, open wide your arms, curve your flight

or stay the course. Ignore those blinds being pulled

down by shaking, feeble hands.

Cannibal Run

52

Lunch Time In A North American City

Office workers

left the stone steps of the courtyard,

oblivious to the ragged man

with the gray polished eyes sitting next to the wastebasket.

After poking

about he removed a Kentucky Fried

lunch box and picked clean

the remaining bones, then ate

the crunched up napkin stained with ketchup.

Cannibal Run

53

Thailand Snapshot

My crime was inaction,

a deadening inertia,

self serving words sheltering,

attacking at will until

I saw the unclothed infant,

its lips frozen around its

mothers nipple, the rat

gouging away at their fused

embrace. I’ve since learned

to fear too much happiness,

whittling away at the desire

and regret that make me

miserable each and every day.

Cannibal Run

54

Broken Neck-Nerve Pain-And Onion Tuna Sandwiches

Hobbling to get the fire started. Hobbling with my back about to collapse,

stumbling headlong into the bathroom, and then racing to my chair, my

beautiful, special chair guaranteed to ease all pain. There’s five medicine

bottles on my table. What pill am I supposed to take now? Ah, it’s this

pain pill.

Lunch hour, and I can’t even crawl to the fridge for my sandwiches, so

I’m sitting here trying to type, and all I want to talk about is shit, piss,

and blood. And of course that monster living in my stomach, feeding on

blood, nerves, and tissue to fuel the burn; that hot constant burn in my guts.

I think of finding a chainsaw to cut out portions of burning flesh, maybe

even a vertebrae or so. Now there’s something wrong with my computer;

the telephones ringing and the stupid song I’ve got on is about walking; an

endless dream shifting through facts of faith, you never know for sure.

Again and again and again that burning flesh. Enough already, my papers

are on the ground and I’m burning like Faustus.

I swallow more pills, hoping they’re the right ones- what’s that you say?

My dogs growling and I’m starting to spasm and jerk and God damn it,

I’m crying, and why isn’t there anyone here to help me?

I throw my blanket over me, grit my teeth, and pray for oblivion. Maybe,

just maybe, a damn asteroid will find my exact spot and squash everything,

and I do mean everything, leaving behind a giant crater.

You heard me, you lucky heartless life affirming bastard’s.

They’d be lucky to find my ground up lenses; lucky.

Cannibal Run

55

“Animus Mundi” 1

Television commercial: millions spent keeping two

Brazilian boys alive in a specialized hospital, but there

is no mention about the one thousand Burundian refugee’s

dying daily.

A father vows vengeance.

A mother shouts out, “Oh my God-why?”

We all share in it, don’t we; that damn interminable

question. Primordial man walked in his own footsteps.

God, they suspected, was nothing more than a donkey’s ass.

“Animus Mundi” 11

There is a jagged opening in the sky.

It is black then white then closes like bleeding teeth.

The tunnel that leads to this aperture is coated with

millions of naked bloated souls, eyes bulging,

jaws open, teeth about to gnash hairless skulls.

Cannibal Run

56

God’s Apprentice

Lips sealed

under

rock and roll,

diffused until

strong breezes

take me to

the ground.

A slow

dive going

down in

city lights,

brimming

like fish in

water,

like policemen buzzing

on guns.

Everything’s

too real,

too real here.

Still,

I remain

sincerely yours.

I am not

God’s apprentice.

Cannibal Run

57

Sleep

Sleep with me under

a wall of reasoned opiates.

Sleep under layers of micro light,

under toys in the attic.

The heart sees gloves

protecting soft hands.

Hitler was a dry tear,

Crayola and a cast of characters

feeding the poison in the genitals.

Doodle art and disassembled beds.

There were no Rembrandts

or Van Gogh’s waltzing in

straight lines. No dancers leaping

over stark fields with secrets

leaking water and oil, blood and rust.

Sleep well under that

wall of reasoned opiates,

and hope that it never topples.

Cannibal Run

58

She Smiles Constantly

These words are mine,

as my smile used to be.

She smiles constantly,

an infectious disease.

King David got more,

he of the half brained

indiscretions.

There is a terminus.

The thermometer she

shake’s has no mercury.

Perfected in concern,

odorless and colorless.

A head as numb

as silent as a snowflake.

Oh to be so heavy with

this simplicity.

Feathered light in

un-thought days.

Cannibal Run

59

A Burdened Insistence

I walked through invisible countryside filled with moats,

with castles as old as the twelfth century, turrets and

lightning spires piercing muscled clouds.

I punched holes in walls, cut barbed wire with my teeth,

held onto the wreckers ball as it punctuated warm New

York evenings, waiting always for morning. Did you see

me as I lay at your feet, silver coins settling on my eyes?

The sunlight upon your face made you look like an angel,

the wide avenue a pedestal for your naked feet. I knew you

saw me, and I wanted to punch a hole through the day,

take you in my arms, take steadfast hold of your brilliant

white hands and place them upon the silver coins indented

in my eyes so that you could heal them and bring the death

in me back to life.

I always knew you were special, even as you floated above

and beyond my need, virginal and saintly as you disappeared

into those muscled clouds, miles to meet concrete, plaster,

barbed wire, moat and castle. You were never meant to be

weighted, light and ethereal the best you could do was to place

your small fingers on my eyes, your spittle a lightless blessing.

Cannibal Run

60

Silent Those Bridges

yearning for reconstruction.

It’s never too late,

your image

unattainable, a smile

under victory shades burning night-less,

the constancy of tears a chemical love

in a ten minute year, looking silently

at the cold blue of her eyes, simplicity

the signature of angels in velvet skinned overcoats.

Fugitive the race of seasons, her love pleated to the moon,

swallowing enlightenment,

swallowing whole the dark,

once in a while smiling

at Jesus who swims naked in the oasis,

eyes dark with approaching laughter,

a red sweltering sun rising and dancing

fluid in the resonating silence, in the pass of the children.

Southern winds whistle tuneless, your iron hands circling

soft bottlenecks.

Memory falls leaden.

Is it true no object can have a memory?

Words the color of blue pain on lovely knees

she steps off the bus,

two steps ahead of everyone,

white ribbons singing

in thick air,

her sex so willing.

Cannibal Run

61

Through The Open Door

The moon sailed away as she breathed out her heart. It might

have been a mind in the dingy whiteness that sinks so far away.

In the canticle hymns it might have been a hummingbird that sang

without righteousness, whiskered moans against her skin, the wall

papering its speed smoothed into a gleam.

How many gods fly from your crevices to parts unknown, perhaps

to hide under my bed? It might have been a mind dissolving in the

burning bush, toes walking through air.

Jaded cold I lay watching my hands. They spoke a language that slid

across the polished floor. Beyond the mastication’s in the darkly lit

room a body splintering into visible light.

Cannibal Run

62

In The Attic

In the corner of the attic a dim light, your

presence emanating from parched rafters,

cobweb lattice a protectorate, on this day

strong enough to hold up the roof to my past.

Flecks of dust and light ignite cold shadows.

Russet beams smelling of honey and pine

creak in parts where they keep hidden cruel

masks battered with secrets.

Unsteady arms reach out to stop the motion.

Cannibal Run

63

The Walking Man

He walks out into dense fog,

sits in the middle of the road and waits.

Nothing happens.

All flesh and bone he comes to a river and sits rocking.

They kept calling him from the roadside truck stop,

a thin reed face with a slice of milk toast burning.

Cup of coffee all the patience of Jesus in a rain that never ends.

No medicine healer he swallows a fistful of white pills.

Police escort 2 a.m. in the dirt of a barn.

Sits rocking wired for sweet Baby James.

In the morning a floating ghost rider;

sunshine crucifixion, money for a shriveled penis.

A jar of peanut butter; setting sun in a city park, the

smell of barbecued steak in tenement time machines.

At night the Sally Ann Hostel.

Old men treading boot worn fears in a loveless factory,

concerto’s, symphonies hiding in secret pages, frozen

flesh wearing tattoos for violent warmth.

A secret society with fistfuls

of matted hair and dreams of tender kisses.

He walks now along Portage Avenue,

stale doughnut and cum laden pennies in newspaper boxes.

He sits on a roadside bench. Suddenly, as if called,

and with fluttering wings, he rises to the bait.

Cannibal Run

64

Paradise Lost

I rolled the van.

What an odd position

trying to open the side door.

It took all of his considerable strength.

I emerged unharmed,

no blood, no broken bones.

I noticed the moonlit leaves,

the swollen moon almost like a halo.

There was just myself lost in the bright

patch of ground, the vans wheels whining.

But no, I was not alone. Something large

and wet at the side of the road was still

breathing

Cannibal Run

65

More Than A Telephone Call

I wanted to call, hear the sound of her voice again, but I couldn’t

find the courage, so here I am at your doorstep. In the shadows of

her room we talked for hours, her dark eyes opening to dim light

erasing shame in an instant of motion. It was then that I asked,

please; please take this old instrument that desperately needs

playing, take my impassioned mouth again, my spittle to trace

your lips as in some exotic movie. Memorize my dialect, because

the brilliant moon isn’t a face for revelation. My face of stone is.

I remembered that first kiss, a brag of the heart with chiseled lips

that never bloomed so red. Heavy those howling winds outside,

those hardened hands that once cradled love. You rose and walked

as a tired stroll to make us strong coffee; still that girlish face that

so often reminded me of Candice Bergen, the curve of your neck

while speaking. Here too is the sudden color rushing to your cheeks.

I know it all as my own sound; a cold trade for warm tears.

Sarah, open your heart. There had once been a power strong enough

to turn black singed lunar snow to white. I heard again that surging

music, my hurt rich with futility, awake in the inscrutable misery of

my spleen. Again those sighs as we rose with Dylan Thomas to meet

the dawn in city square, questioning the flicker and flame of our in- explicable love, trusting that one day it would return. You placed

your hand in mine. In the darkness of your room the words I heard

were so sacred, so healing.

Cannibal Run

66

Such Sadness

Sadness that knows no equal.

My hands are empty, light,

yet my heart is full of this rock hard sadness,

this damn impermeable sadness

rooted in sedimentary layers,

in the mountainous bottom of ocean beds.

Such sadness on this wet March evening,

rubber boots playing out melodies in

melting rivulets along sidewalks,

hands seeking out warmth in cluttered pockets.

I am drifting now down one of the many

miniature rivers that intersect each other on the

confused concrete,

thinking about my childhood on the now infamous

Jane Street Corridor, thinking of my alcoholic

father who in his demented wisdom knew when

to leave and of the stepfather who would never leave.

I slip quietly into bed, just as the sun rises weakly.

My wife’s breathing is slow, heavy; at peace with

itself. I feel her damp warmth and leanness without

waking her.

I dream. I am on a raft drifting along rivers of pure light.

The raft disintegrates.

Sadness that knows no equal.

I slip into the rivers soothing current.

It is clear and lucent.

There is nothing in sight but the primal mud of the

river bed.

Cannibal Run

67

Summers End

You will not be able to answer

these uncommonly large questions,

like where have the birds gone

and will they come back.

You think it a matter of maps and longitudes

and all day the fast thinking sky has drained you.

You are sure

the birds have instinct, color, and light,

but you haven’t been blessed

with the courage to hunt them.

As evening cracks

you hum a noisy tune,

a secret code to retrieve

the birds.

It is your grace, your blessing,

your falling into willow baskets

lined with fur, your talisman.

Cannibal Run

68

Honeybee Chinese American Restaurant

It was an old Chinese restaurant close to Portage and Main, its raised pew like

seats offering a view of the cluttered sidewalk and its numerous transients. The

walls were a lime green. Its floor tiles were lifting and here and there flattened cardboard boxes covered them. Small globe lights hanging from its water stained

ceiling flickered overhead, periodically sparking. Wrinkled old men in black loose

garments sat at the long counter, chattering gibberish, oblivious to the unshaven

man with his bulging backpack on the floor. A big Chinese woman swayed un-

evenly on a squeaking rocker beside a large bronze plated cash register, casually

cleaning her fingernails with a toothpick; above her a row of slanted cream pies

and above that a portrait of a rosy jowl Santa espousing the virtues of Coca Cola.

With grave disinterest the woman on the rocker went about the difficult task of

getting me the cup of coffee I had to shout for. She put down the cup and saucer

with a force that caused much of its content to spill out across the well worn yet

splintered wooden table. I thanked her for what was left of the coffee, feigning a

smile. Unperturbed, she resumed her rocking alongside the bronze plated cash

register, still chewing on the toothpick she had used to clean her fingernails.

Cannibal Run

69 Pascal’s Inimitable Proof Of God

Nathan was

part Native Indian,

part Irish,

and rode an Italian

motorcycle, a bike strong enough to race

all the way to Vancouver, holding onto nothing

as fast as the machine that would carry him.

When the wind blew hard he was out of time.

He was the inbuilt arrow of time, the tenacity

of old bones rolling by cities blanketing fear.

He rode fast by missions of scandal,

sweating anger; past fields of drought,

diesel trucks threatening death, but always

from behind.

He rode trying to outpace his demons.

He rode with open time,

kissing the voices that wailed

in his head.

He swerved past road mines, pink

clapboard houses, rusted weather vanes,

clotheslines, malls, vineyards; past

marble saints.

He loved the hieroglyphics of night.

Big Bear. Little Bear. The Hunter;

especially Pole Star, our singular

north axis, the true spinning point

of the world.

Cannibal Run

70

Pascal’s Inimitable Proof of God

The way he figured it, The Raven Mocker

was still clawing at his hair, scraping

at his heels. He knew he had to

outfox it before he gave it the

chance to eat his heart.

And now he’s figuring he’s won

his race with death,

but he can’t stop the Darkening Waters

waiting for him out there

on the shores of Vancouver.

He was one of those special men

who thought, with modern technology,

that he could outrace the Raven Mocker,

inscrutable as it is.

His face to the wind, he races now,

sharp and fierce,

vowing to break skin.

Cannibal Run

71

At Night In Winnipeg

I remember the day,

how snow flaked into my soul,

froze to ice stabbing at the breast.

Ice lens. Acidic snow brilliant

hummocks, pebble remains in the

iced light of day.

Suicide started humming

like winter metal,

faces passing frozen comets.

My mind was always just ahead,

two paces in front it took sharp corners,

followed me up elevators,

down into arctic tunnels.

Easy to remember feet anchored

in drifts of snow.

So too percolating coffee,

personalities cloning each other

to preserve the snowed in day.

At night I remember

murderous imperfections,

street names layered in snow and ice;

the disoriented pain of growing up

in fifteen feet of snow that would

never get shoveled.

Cannibal Run

72

Endings

They came in little battalions, little sharks of blackened

light that cut down knee high wheat with the swift

stroke of a sharp sickle and hammer.

No time for loss, sorrow a constraint stronger than lichens.

He glows oddly blue and yellow. But if parts stand the cold winter,

he becomes young again; the water antarctic.

He coughs up his cancer, thinking of all the ingested

substances that wormed their way into blood,

vessels, synapses, future sites of creation abolished by old

brick, spherical underpinnings, smiling gargoyles.

He is leaving. On the delta time stops. Cold, knee high

water warps the hard hearted memories; that tea for

the tiller man who still harvests with sickle and hammer, such a

moist wet leaving for all the dry hardened age of Aquarius

lamentations.

Daylight again. The cost. The cost is buried in those fluffy little

clouds. Pain consumes everything, all light, all freedom, even that

city in the dark. He tried to draw out all the magic syllables, the

sword that would draw circle kingdoms in the ether, in the

minuscule rivers and valleys of blood, but they abandoned him.

Will only 70,000 enter without reckoning? Will this one wracked

body and mind be able to set loose the constraints and fly to parts

unknown?

Memory

dreams

premonitions

touch new portents.

In the end a symphony of dead grass, dueling banjo’s,

and the immensity of a solitary coda.

Instants of Time

74

Boston Commons

Love can be a

black nomad in a desert,

but it can not move mountains.

Love can be a room of ones

own, but it is only a temporary

fire in the muscle.

Love did not count the tears

of the old man

face down on the sidewalk,

tongue and pulse

begging forgiveness.

Love can be like

Boston Commons. Tall trees, pink blossoms,

children pitching pennies,

but it is not like war in Bethlehem.

Love can be a day spent at an

airport, but it will never put on

a uniform.

Instants of Time

Resurrection Fern

In the dark I drank your bitterness,

half drugged, rising to hold you down,

to hold myself within your tiny sphere,

a muddled flushing stillness,

the thread of a muscled

ever diminishing contraction.

You hummed your angry resistance,

your sharp thrusts

like cottonwood

rimming an empty consciousness.

In the dark I sat and looked blankly

at your dresser, your resurrection fern

cut like a gaudy Christmas tree.

Instants of Time

76

White River

Frost tipped spear

remains poised atop the little town

still asleep, evanescent apparition

to the parked voyager gazing down from

the hilltop eating Oreo cookies

for breakfast, logistical creations failing

always to enjoy the moment,

too intoxicated

with the heat in this swollen

brain surging forwards, backwards

in stopgap measures, a rhythm of pain

in a space undetected, black robed

Jesuits taming the savagery

of their own disbelief, spurting semen

into the womb of

the stone fountain,

cold tribute to Father Alouez’s mission

to the Nipigon’s: circa 1667.

Football sized

crows circle smokestacks,

dive for French fries in the vacant parking lot,

red soil an ancient burial ground

for the uninitiated dark robed saints flying

into the sun

to be burned for food at our tables,

their deaths gurgling deep, thinning in contact,

motionless in grace,

a mode of ring rippling road; a shot tongue,

the gun close to your lips sealed tight

in a diagnostic digit.

Static Airwaves

80

Lord Nelson

Young girls in tie dye shirts

and long flowering smocks

smile up at him as if they know.

Laughter, and then the sobering realization

that he’s lived long enough to see

it all repeated. He thinks of his

friends from way back when.

They’re all gone.

He doesn’t know why.

He thinks he’ll find them in Vancouver,

in the bars, cafes, bistros,

in that place where all the weed is shipped in,

tagged and distributed.

A man, a window, and a childhood feeling

of uniqueness, poverty, massive egos

and bartered hands.

He searches for a vein,

dying too soon

to reach that stage of blissful forgetting.

Instants of Time

81

CN Blanket

On this train to Montreal

Cathy and I would ask for

pillows and pull a CN blanket

over us for the four and a half

hours it took us to get there,

locked in passionate embrace.

It was on one of these milk

runs that she unexpectedly

blurted out that she loved me,

my chest expanding,

exploding with pride,

responsibility and

an ugly,

inarticulate,

inexplicable

maddening fear.

Instants of Time

82

Winter Pastures

Dark, dark the archway of the beast,

black smoke

billowing, chiseling, signaling

the hiss at the chamber full

of unsound

faces,

poison staining forever.

The darkness of deep flesh

whispers, feeds hungrily

under

the

archway

of

the

beast.

Fingertips etch deep lines

furrowing loose ground above

grace filled liquids.

Slowly

the

pungent

aftertaste

of

another

life.

Quickly the warm rush electrifies,

mutates dark and alien inside the

unseen chamber,

the black

velvet underground

suffocating charcoal.

The beast leaps,

the bloodline

splatters,

churns,

feeds the hungry archway of beasts

as deep babbling voices rise to bury themselves

in winter pastures.