



cut jour hair art by Cheryl Townsend



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(the loss of free selection of meals without fear of government repercussions)

guest editorial by John Yotko

I was listening to the radio this morning on my way to work and I heard Terry O'Brien mention that the Transportation Safety Administration wanted to start collecting information about passenger meal selection. The first thing I thought, 'for what purpose do they need this information?' Then I thought, 'what right have they to this information?'

She then said that they were probably using it to study the behavior of passengers to determine if they may be terrorists. Terry noted that they have computer logarithms (Jake suggested that she meant algorithm) that they can put this data through to profile the passengers to see if they may be a terrorist threat. Jake joked that the ACLU will probably get all up in arms over this one. Her own state of Illinois agrees that racial profiling is a crime. Meanwhile the TSA has taken to settling profiling cases out of court rather than facing a decision by the Supreme Court that this is unconstitutional. Immediately I was trying to dial the radio station but I couldn't get through. While I was trying to dial, she said that people do not have a right to fly, that it is a privilege. When did it become a privilege for a private individual to enter into a contract with a corporation for transportation? The day the "Patriot" Act passed, that is when. Don't worry, your rights aren't evaporating.

I thought about the references that I hear from many of the socialists, communists and liberals that I know about President George W. Bush being a Fascist. What is fascism? It is a political philosophy that glorifies the state (there is a very good description of Fascism at http://www.publiceye.org/eyes/whatfasc.html). I don't believe that President is Fascist but it appears that many of his supporters are becoming just that. If anyone questions his decisions, the Bush cultists immediately decry that person as being un-American. Since when did it become un-American to protest government action (see the two quotes

from American history in this essay)? That was how this country was founded. Remember that your freedom ultimately was defined by a group of traitors and the one we are taught was a traitor, Benedict Arnold, was the one who was loyal to his king and country.

Arnold, was the one who was loyal to his king and country.

Now Terry is an intelligent woman. She must be, because I agree with her quite often, although I don't particularly care for her delivery. I am certain she knows the meaning of the following two quotes:

Patrick Henry said, "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" Another respected individual, Benjamin Franklin, stated, "Those who would sacrifice liberty for security deserve neither liberty nor security."

The meanings of the two quotes are obvious. The first establishes that the government should be allowed only to do what the people allow it to do. In fact, that is what the Constitution states. People accepting the gradual changes taking place in our society are slowly eroding this. Franklin's quote is far more to the point. He is saying that you can't protect freedoms by taking them away. An analogy is the boiling frog. If you take a frog and drop it in a pan of boiling water, it will immediately jump out. If you place that same frog in a pan of warm water and slowly raise the temperature to a boil, you will cook it. We are the frogs and that water is our liberties. We are remaining warm and cozy as our freedoms evaporate.

ing warm and cozy as our freedoms evaporate.

Note: The author is libertarian in philosophy and polit ical alignment. Any assumptions that he may support communism, socialism because he knows people of this political alignment is wholly misguided. He maintains his right to complain about the government because he has voted in every election since he was old enough to vote and has never voted for the winner.

Wanna hear more rants? Check out A Rant of my Own at John Yotko's web site, at http://www.yotko.com.



Shadovas Daniel Adame

When the sun falls below The distant horizon And it's light fades into night The shadows come out

That's what I call the Creatures that roam in the Between places of my world

I seldom see them But I can certainly feel them Creeping, almost flowing along the Floors, walls, windows, And especially ceilings

My skin tingles when they are near Then it chills instantly when They scan about looking for Something or someone I still cannot tell

Those moments come and go Yet there are some that I can never Brush away from my memories

Moments where I am asleep In an empty room When nobody witnesses the door Between the places open to me

Moments where I can see As clear as day the surroundings That do not seem the same in The light of the between Where the cold splashes around me Wave after wave

Moments when the shadow takes Hold of me and pins me back To my slumbering husk Where I let out a scream That nobody in reality can hear

I struggle against the shadow As I inch my way through An unseen passage Until I begin to hear once again

But in hearing myself I can never avoid The Demons and Angels whispering Their sweet nothings into my ear

Dirty, by Daniel Adame

How nice it must be for us To have such a large wardrobe to choose from To have great multitudes of faces to wear And fragrances to mask our scent

How consuming it must be for us
To perpetuate the politics of our lives
To waste our precious moments mired in lies
And escaping the consequences of truth

How entertaining it must be for us To dance so close to oblivion To sing so loud in unison That we drown the voices of the past

How dreadful it must be for us To be left naked and vulnerable When we are truest to ourselves When we are treading the mud of obscurity

How surprising must it be for us
When we try to wash away the marks
Only to find the stains permanent
A constant reminder that we are tainted souls



art from Xanadu

trouble in paradice

John Dorsey

maybe she'd been the apple of your eye eaten out lightly purring rthym rain tapping against the window

eve picking "the grapes of wrath" up at some used bookstore

but some apples are filled with worms

and paradise isn't paradise for long enternity smiles on imperfection as if it were the red headed step child of a disco icon

and the only tapping going down lately is that weathered vein used to pay the rent

and love is hiding under

the covers waiting for the sun to make a false move

and at 5:38 am these things seem like bitter fruit

when paradise seems too troubled to say i love you or even brush

her teeth

Voting Booth Blues Christopher Fraga

I am glad to be twenty because now all the poetry I write is not automatically bad because it is teenage poetry. It is now automatically bad because it is cynical,

disenfranchised twenty-something poetry.

I will keep that in mind next election.

Apparently voting and disenfranchisement are mutually exclusive.

Whoever assigned polling stations had it in for me and placed the Jewish Community Center a block away from my first-floor condo.

Without the excuse of laziness.

there is no way I can't vote.

It's a strange location for a JCC.

I don't even know any Jews who live in my neighborhood.

Apparently there's a large migratory population of Jews

that haphazardly drive or walk or fly to within a block of my house

at random and unpredictable intervals to do whatever Jews do in a JCC.

Personally, I haven't a clue.

The only experience I've ever had with a JCC

has been directly related to voting.

Well, that and I was once friends with a devout, born again Christian who was given the old pool table

from said JCC a block from my house by another friend,

who was a Jew, who attended said JCC, and didn't live in my neighborhood.

I would have liked to have seen him go pick up the pool table.

He would have had to check Jesus at the door

like some inexpensive and poorly lined coat and

received in Jesus' place a voucher that

he could trade in at the end of the night for his savior.

I am sure if he asked nicely, Jesus wouldn't have minded

being hung up in a closet next to all the other messiahs.

But, having spoken to my friend lately,

I think he should have just kept the voucher.

CARDINAL MESSAGE

Michael Keshigian

The cardinals were silent this morning, not a sound until the sun came up, though they're usually out at the gray of dawn to sing a song, praising the arrival of light which they long for, crooning from treetops about living and the simple life, insights they daily share with us in well phrased melodies, hoping we stop to listen.



MR. JAMES IN HIS COFFIN

Vince Fitzpatrick

Mr. James in his coffin at the Funeral Home. His sister, given over the fake piety and self-promotion,

Has taken charge of everything--"Jim would have wanted it this way",
She snivels to each arriving mourner from
Behind expensive black veils.

Mr. James in his coffin after 75 years, Looking as innocent as a boy before his first communion

(causing much admiring commentary on the undertaker's art)

Bathed in blue glowing lights, (the light of heaven),

A rosary beads in his prayer folded hands,

A picture of a crowned-with-thorns Jesus pinned to his suit lapel.

Now the padre, hired by his sister, enters,
Sprinkling the coffin with holy water
(The sister, surprising spry, sprints forward to
catch some of the spray---after all, she's paying for it);
Intones long prayers, assures mourners Jimmy is now
in heaven, basking in God's presence.
From behind their veils, women snivel their approval.
Mr. James is his coffin after 75 years,

An outspoken, unregenerate atheist for the last 20 of them.

WINDY CITY BIBLE

Shaun Millard

God is perpetual twilight down Michigan Avenue

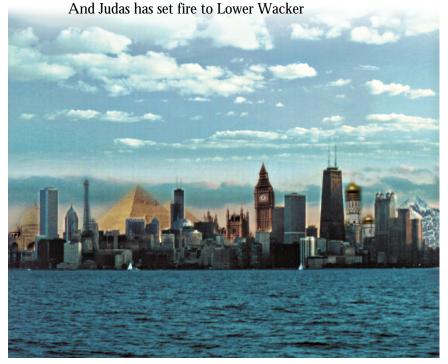
Jesus warms his hands by garage barrel bonfires
Amidst the glamorous waste of Lower Wacker
He preaches atop discarded McDonald's crates
One glorious dissertation to gathering poverty
His home
cardboard trim ornamented with mealworm colonies
Disposable household
bureaucracies squander
Under Wacker there is a map to the son of man
Just follow the hammers in the dark

Noah has docked the arc in Navy pier
Lincoln Park Zoo has relocated to coincide with his wishes
A public service announcement on Animal Planet
"Mating habits of all species will now be shown from the Ferris wheel"
Incessant chirps, roars, moans, repeat
Sends mortal stupor to glass-eyed tourists

David detonates the dispensable time bomb Along parquet ash and steel mortem He claims victory over Sears Tower tragedy Self-proclaimed sky king He has slain Goliath Adam pricked by black-eyed bushes Intrigued by radiance his sin magnifies While Eve capitulates under the maple tree The audience of squirrel beggars uncovers Arrogance in her heart

Moses emancipates stock exchange's ethereal souls Parting cars east to west down Lake Shore Rush hour is hell Penthouse suite Hancock Building

"Moral Codes Sold Here"
Thou shalt steal, rape, kill, and pillage in order
To satisfy one's palette
Crosses replace road signs
Rosaries are handouts on street corners
Church bells resonate timepiece
The alter is industry



On First Seeing My Photograph as a Six-Month Child

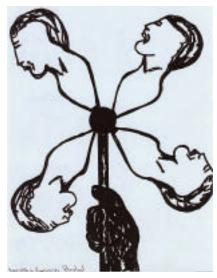
Michael R. Collings

Feet splayed, he sits alone
On the harsh concrete expanse-behind
Him, shadowed so severely that nothing
Shows but alternating stripes
(Were they olive and gold, perhaps, or blue
and turquoise, always her favorites).
He sits. His arms raised high
As if begging him or her or them
To bend and pick him up.
They don't-or won't-but laugh (presumably) at antics thought too cute,
Too charming to ignore.

And fifty years slide by.
He sits alone, feet tucked
Sedately beneath his desk, arms
Raised to touch the keyboard and resurrect an infant self, a slice
Of shadow, a concrete waste,
And faces just beyond his lens.







Music Hath Charms and Pirawheel by Edward Michael O'Durr Supranowicz

Be Sweet

marie lascu

No taste for the bitter drink, I wet my lips, I take a deep breath. A casual stare can burn hard images into a boy's brain. So I just smile, I nod, feeling like a small girl in grown-up land. Now my thoughts run blank, twitching, I cross my arms to keep me steady. Unsteady, I want my dreams, keep these eager hands away, push their voices into boxes made of whispers. To be alone, to be sweet.

Fever Amy Durant

It is something that happens, sometimes: a person will go up in flames. They burn at about 3,000 degrees. This is hotter than a crematorium. Things are sometimes left behind: an arm, a foot, the head.

Investigators often blame smoking, drinking, suicidal tendencies. Nothing around this person is burned. Their clothing doesn't burn. The carpet remains pristine.

The fires are internal in origin.

There are few survivors. The ones that do live to tell say they remember nothing. They remember talking to a friend, perhaps, then a dark hot void, finally waking up in the hospital as empty as a husk, burned black, hands curled, faces melted into masks.

When they find me, please tell them II. I've always burned hot, even in the coldest winter. If this were a fairy tale, I would have swallowed a cinder as a child, a burning needle, a firefly. Believe me, I have swallowed none of these things, yet still I burn, I glow, a banked potbelly stove.

They will find perhaps a foot, a finger, the curve of an ear. My clothes will still be plump with my shape. They will blame suicide, smoking.

They will not think to blame you.

This fire will be internal in origin: my eyes will go first, burning blue, twin pilot lights. It will slowly burn through each memory of you, back to the beginning, the genesis of this yearning. I will embrace the fire like a lover come home from a long journey. I will take it to bed. There will be no afterwards in which to remember nothing.

A finger, a foot, the curve of an ear. These are left behind for you as curios of a forgotten time in which I loved you at temperatures beyond all that is rational.

Girl, art by Rose E. Grier



GENESIS

Louis Faber

Cain slew Abel in a moment of anger, a crime of passion would be his defense today. We can only imagine what Isaac might have done to Ishmael, had Haggar not been sent off by Abraham, after all he was a child who saw the knife first hand and helped sacrifice the thicketed ram.

Joseph tasted the pit at his brothers' hands mourned by his father only to emerge and forgive. It is little wonder we Semites can't get along, Jew and Jew, Israeli and Palestinian, we've been rehearsing this act for millennia.

UNKNOWING

Louis Faber

I don't know what

I am, the Buddha said.

I don't know why

my mother gave me up at birth or how many cousins walk the streets of Lisbon or where I lost my first tooth

I don't know what

became of the nickel or why the tooth fairy was so tight or who will wash the blood from the streets of Basra

I don't know how

my walkman eats batteries
like Hostess Twinkies
or why fungus grows underground
or why the Somali child stares through
starving eyes

I don't know why

my dough rises, only to fall mockingly, or why forced to eat matzah, the Jews didn't go back to Egypt or why I poke my sore knee to insure it

hurts

I don't know

my birthright name



even after 32 jean

Michael Estabrook

My brother commented that he was surprised I was taking ballroom dancing lessons with my wife, didn't seem like something in character for me, not something I really wanted to do. And I said, "What can you do together after the children have gone? Going to the movies and dinner isn't really much of a hobby to do together. I'm interested in poetry and genealogy, archeology, history . . . and she likes to garden and shop, so what can we do together, as a couple? Yes dancing seems like the perfect thing." And he said, "Oh I see, that makes sense." And I added, "Another thing, dancing gives me the chance to hold her and that's always a nice thing for me even after 32 years of marriage."

Embassed Couple art by Mike Hovancek



AN HONEST DAY'S WORK

Michael Estabrook

Dad earned his living by fixing cars. But he could've been a truck driver instead. I can see him high up in the cab of a mighty orange tractor-trailer, his arm jutting out

of the window, sipping coffee endlessly from his dented, old silver thermos, smoking Pall Malls, driving

hard all night, not sleeping so as to make his delivery on time. Yes, I can see him sitting there, sure as shooting, clutching the wheel, bleary-eyed but smiling, proud

to be doing his job so well, proud of doing an honest, damn day's work.



Harbor

art by Deborah FerBer

father

Alan Corkish

a man i called father ~for a brief moment. in my life~ smoked a clay pipe and chewed 'old rope' which spittled crackling on the open fire eyes grey as a north sea storm never settled on me and he went to his death without us ever touching or meaning anything to one another he was just there and he came and went with no word of greeting or goodbye except for once when his own son died and i saw salt in the crevices that seared his face like the salt grey of his hair and the eyes dimmed briefly in that brushed leather face as a single finger, coarse and brown like a ropes end, brushed away what might have been a memory or an unstoppable tear

Maybe That LEnough

ੰਅਯਬੇ ਠਤ ਈਸ ਨੋਉਘ ਸ਼ਓਮੇਤਿਮੇਸ ਬਿੰਗਸ ਵੋਰਕ ਓਉਤ ਅੱਚੋਰਿਦੰਗ ਤੋਂ ਪਲਨ ਆਦ ਸੋਮੇਤਿਮੇਸ ਥੋਂ ਪਲਨ ਇਸ ਨੌਤ ਏਚਾੱਯ ਵਤ ਯੋਉ ਹਦ ਇਨ ਮਿੰਦ ਭਉਤ ਸੋਮੇਤਿਮੇਸ ਯੋਉ ਚਨ ਅਤ ਲੇਅਸਤ ਬੇ ਹਯ ਵਿਥ ਥੇ ਪਲਨ ਅੰਦ ਈ ਤੱਕੇਦ ਤੋਂ ਯੋਉ ਤੋਦਯ ਆਦ ਈ ਬਿੰਕ ਨੇਇਬੇਰ ਓਨੇ ਓਫ਼ ਉਸ ਹਵੇਂ ਪਲੰਸ ਫ਼ੋਰ ਤੋਨਿਘਤ ਆਦ ਥੇਰੇ ਇਸ ਅ ਚੰਚੇ ਯੋਉ ਵਿੱਲ ਬੇ ਇਨ ਤੋਵਨ ਫ਼ੋਰ ਥੇ ਹੋਲਿਦਯ ਆਦ ਮਯਬੇ ਬੜ ਮੇਅੇਸ ਈ ਦੋਨਤ ਗੋਤ ਤੋਂ ਸੇਏ ਯੋਉ ਫ਼ੋਰ ਥੇ ਹੋਲਿਦਯ ਈ

> Gurmukhi translation by Carter Donovan

Evaporative as smoke, I had known wallflower life, was the wall itself, embedding the green.



from State Desire Being, by Stephen Mead

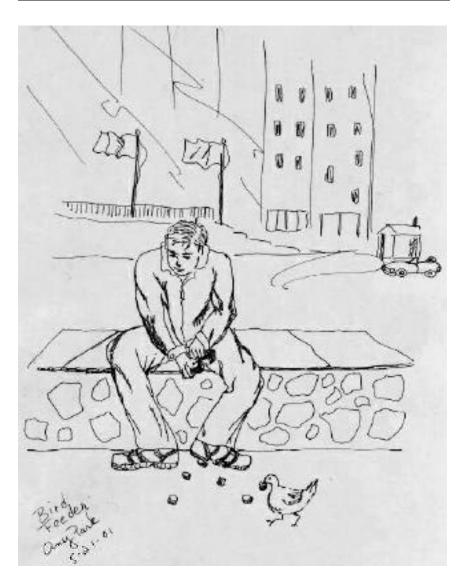
there is a roofless Church in Liverpool all gates barred bar one thistle and bindweed now compete where suppliants knelt submissive lace-like elder flowers cabbage whites and magpies invade everywhere and buddleia beckon through bomb-burnt twisted metal frames enwrapping shattered glass a pine grows where the Alta menaced and pale-flowered brambles laden with cuckoo-spit leer down the walls and climb the octagon turrets that point their accusing spires skywards... the clock in Berry Street, frozen at midnight...

St Luke & Church

Alan Corkish

beside this shell this 'place of rest and tranquillity... purchased from the Church ' a spire of split granite invites us to 'remember the great famine' ...and i do: some order rises here from chaos some peculiar logic makes the ruin more peaceful now in death than she ever was in life





Bird Feeder Any Park

art by Irene Ferraro

lakota #/

john sweet

the city is the machine and the machine is god

god is what you create with bleeding hands

look at these roads laid down over the bones of indians

look at what pollock was trying to show you

what comes after the age of the ghost dance is the age of advancement

the bullets pierce the white shirts and the children are slaughtered

the song is an old one

the machine can only be destroyed from within



Autumn's Purge, art by Nicole Aimiee Macaluso

geography john sweet

this age of rain and of wasted time

this flat expanse of land between the mountain and the river

the piles of garbage and the burned-out gas stations and these teenage girls in trailer parks

the babies their boyfriends leave them with

the sad little deaths that should matter more than they do

all of these names that we spend our lives forgetting



Questions in a World Without Answers

a 10/05/04 live Chicago persormance art show

did you ever use a ouija board? I mean, you hear stories of people getting togehther, placing their fingers on a plastic piece with a glass window, asking a spirit to give them answers to questions. Now, I had a party once on a Friday, October 13th, I had what I called a *supernatural shindig* in my one-bedroom apartment, where I put pages from the **Weekly World News** all over my walls, with headlines saying things like "Anceint Eqyptian Mummy Terrorizes Village", or "How To Tell if your Prostitute is an Extra Terrestrial", and "Aliens Branded Me Like A Steer!".

So I had this shindig in my little place, and I was wearing a mini-skirt dress, and Jay & Brian came over and went straight to the ouija board on the floor, put their hands on the glass, and one of them said loudly, "Is Janet wearing any underwear?" and they moved their hands straight to the word "no " and yelled, "no!"

And yeah, some questions can be funny, like when

squid

once i was sitting in the living room, and i walked to the kitchen sink. mom was there, but didn't mention the sink was half-full of raw squid for her dinner. I shriek. mom laughs. "are their beady little eyes looking up at you?" she asked.

or like when I was

On the California Streets

and we were walking along Santa Monica Boulevard. We passed a young homeless man, and he asked could you spare a hundred thousand dollars? and I thought, of course he won't get it but of all the places in the world, this is the only place where he could get away with asking for it

So yeah, people can laugh at the ouija board at a party of adults, but there are so many questions in the world that we hear and want answers to.

Right There By Your heart

like have you ever had that feeling before, you know, the one when someone is telling you something you don't want to hear? like if someone was about to tell you that someone died and you knew what they were going to say and you still didn't want to hear it? or if someone did something to you you didn't like, like when you were little and the kids at the bus stop shot pebbles and spit balls at you every day because you were smart and you still had to go to the bus stop every morning and just try to ignore them? and when that happens it feels like a medium sized rock just fell into the bottom of your stomach, and you don't want to move because you're afraid that the rock will hurt the inside of your stomach and so you just have to sit there and hope the rock goes away? or else you get the feeling in your chest, right between your lungs, it feels

like someone is pressing against the bone there,

right there by your heart, and you've got to breathe, you're not going to be able to take that pressure, that force any longer?

And sometimes questions are battles over little details, like when we had

russians at a garaga sale

our annual garage sale this year and all these old couples came walking by

they were from the russian neighborhood they could barely speak english

they would pick up an iron. "how much?" "four dollars." "fifty cents?" "no."

it was a warm indian summer day we were all clad in shorts and sunglasses

they would point at the iron, a toaster, a blender. "all for a dollar?" "no."

and all the old couples wore raincoats and scarves wrapped around their heads

they would pick up a wine glass. "how much?"
"twenty-five cents."
"how about ten?"

But you know, it then occurred to me that the most questions off the tope of our heads are about relationships, and what we want, and what we hide, too...

All Men Have Secrets

all men have secrets and here is mine. Strength is my weakness and now my shoulders don't stay in place. You ask me to open my eyes but they are, aren't they? Why don't you take me in your arms? Why don't you seduce me? Tear me in half. Rip me apart. Just don't cast me aside. I don't want to be strong. Be strong for me, so that I can adjust my chin and not have to worry about whether or not my eyes are open.

But when I looked, I began to see questions everywhere, like when

content with inferior men

i heard some theorists say that women need to look up to a man in order to feel complete. they'd say that a woman couldn't be president, think of it - here is a woman, the most important person on earth, and she would never know of anyone who had more power than her. how could she look up to any man? how could she admire or respect any man? and on saome points I agree how can you love someone you don't respect? But all i could think in response is, why don't men who are U. S. presidents find themselves unhappy with their boring, unequal, supportive wives? why is it that men are content with inferior women but women aren't content with inferior men?

So, I started thinking of these questions, and thinking of relationships gone awry, and I started to think of all the questions we have to those who do us wrong. Because it <u>does</u> seem that some men are content with inferior women and some men even like to downgrade and hurt women.

I mean, I write when I can't find answers to questions, when I see things that are unfair.

Burn It In

What did you think I was doing when I was stuffing hand-written notes into my pockets or typing long hours into the night? In my spare time, I was sitting in the university computer lab slamming my hands, my fingers against the keyboard because there were too many atrocities in the world too many injustices that I had witnessed too many people who had wronged me

and I had a lot of work to do.

There had to be a record of what you've done.

Did you think your crimes would go unpunished? Well you see, that's what I have my poems for so there will always be a record of what you have done I have defiled many pages in your honor, you who swung your battle ax high above your head and thought no one would remember in the end. Well, I made a point to remember. Yes, I have defiled many pages and have you defiled many women? You, the man who rapes my friends? You, the man who rapes my sisters? You, the man who rapes me? Is this what makes you a strong man?

Questions come up everywhere in this world, whether or not there's even about the sexes, like

Private Lives 1

the elevated train Chicago Illinois

when you're on the el and you see everyone crammed like little sardines into this little can. you look around and you think:

why do these chairs have to face each other?

They say Americans need their space need their privacy and here I sit, while he sits right across from me

I can't lookI can't but in the edge of my vision I see his dirty clothes his dirty hair his dirty mind

will he watch me get off the train, note the stop I take watch me walk too?

another time i was on the train

Private Lives 4

the elevated train Chicago Illinois

and a standing child saw writing

on the back of her Batman doll

"What does it say?"
"Made in China."
"Is that his name?"

this was the window I was looking through



Made in China...

Thinking about traveling on a train,

I thought about my love of travel, I've asked questions about different cultures - in China, Europe, even Puerto Rico.

Scare 2000

and I thought: what do I have to show for everything done is all of this travel like pins and military stripes of an admiral after goals have been accomplished? or do you earn so many pins, military stripes, and medals of honor that they just weigh you down?

But then I thought about my love of travel, and outer space. I've had a star named after me, and my name is on a CD that will go on the Deep Impact Spacecraft into Comet





Tempel in 2005, and I talk about loving outer space so much, but I don't think I'll actually ever *get* there. And then it occurred to me: I *have*.

What I mean is that all radio signals are shot out into space, and I've been on WEFT, WZRD, WLS, even Q101. I wonder how far my voice has traveled into outer space by now. And all television programs are shot into outer space, too - these signals get to the people on earth, but these signals continue to travel towards the ends of the universe. I've been on the news, I've had poetry videos published on television stations

in Nashville and Chicago... I wonder what other stars have seen my poetry by now. I wonder if anything out there can decode our signals and understand what we're trying to tell them.

...Or should I wonder about what people <u>here</u> think, or should we know how to go through losing someone <u>here?</u> I mean, what questions go through your head when a loved one dies? Do you think that no one could be feeling as much pain as the pain you feel? Do you want to confront them after the wreckage and just ask,

After The Wreckage

Is someone mourning for you for too long And you, the deceased, didn't know anyone would care And you, the deceased, didn't know they were dead So ... So was it just me?

Do I feel this alone?

Does your spirit rise after the wreckage And you watch from above And see how everyone reacts And see how I cry And see how I suffer?

Is this what you're doing to me? Is that the way it goes?



People's Lives Were At Stake

You know, I was remembering an event that everyone was talking about years ago; you'd hear the reports on the news about the damage done during the riots, and you'd think that we were in a war zone and that all of this was done for religious purposes and people's lives were at stake and maybe they were and I just don't know it. I don't know.

But there was a trial case where a black man was *convicted* of a police brutality crime, and the black community was outraged, saying that the

white man was holding them down, and so a large group of people started a rally, and I heard the next day that in light of the trial 23 fires were started, mostly in libraries...

then I heard about one of my best friends, a white man, hit once by a black man in the street hat night, and for six weeks his jaw was wired shut and he had to throw pizza or meat loaf in the blender to eat while he recovered.



Slavery was abolished in 1865.

The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964.

Because of the Rodney King trial in 1992, 23 fires were started in libraries. And I thought:

Is all this violence getting anything done? are we coming any closer to racial harmony? what are we learning from this?

In light of the political elections this fall, I started wondering if anyone running for office could really help American with the issues we're faced with daily.

Being from Illinois, I thought of political candidates Alan Keyes (a man from Maryland running in Illinois). But he says it's not right to have an abortion, but the death penalty is good. Should I get my answers from a man who thinks it's not right terminate a fetus that can't live on its

own, but it's apparently okay to kill those who have already been living?

That doesn't help me... But all I feep thinking about is how our government is supposed to protect us, and everyone felt something was missing after 9/11. Then I remember that news reports were stating after 9/11 that if flight 93 that crashed in Shanksville Pennsylvania landed less than 30 seconds later, my nephew would have been killed while in school from that crash.

After 9/11, my nephew couldn't sleep for days. Can he be comforted that we had a decision-making president to help an economy that was failing for a year before he became president, when we are gaining jobs in 2004? Can he be comforted that the decisive President Bush stepped in to fight terrorist-supporting nations like Iraq when everyone else backed away?

I don't know if President Bush can help us, when I wonder why people who have lost jobs have found that new jobs now pay Americans on average 13 grand <u>less</u> per year. Then I wonder: George Bush prays in the Oval Office, and occasionally he even open cabinet meetings with prayer. May he be too much of a religious zealot to warrant reelection? And another thing: both the right and the left oppose the Patriot Act, and Bush wants to expand government powers under it. But what frightened me the most was when I heard a President Bush's advertisement that ended saying the country relies on freedom, faith, families and sacrifice.

What do we have to sacrifice for Bush's plan?

What have we already sacrificed for Bush's plan?

John Kerry and John Edwards protested and say that in war situations Kerry'd deploy all the forces in America's arsenal - our <u>diplomacy</u>, our <u>intelligence system</u>, our <u>economic power</u>, and the appeal of our <u>values</u> and ideas - to make America more secure

Do the Democrats have the answers? Let me think... Our diplomacy didn't do anything for years. We've been <u>using</u> our intelligence system already. And we <u>are</u> the biggest economic power in the world. And they <u>hate</u> our values and ideas. How will <u>that</u> help?

The Green party noteed that this election is dominated by fear. The Republicans play on the fear of terrorism and the Democrats play on the fear of Bush. Do we have to play on fear to elect our president?

I've seen how other countries deal with our problems, like gas prices, or health care. In europe, gas is expensive (their government doesn't subsidize its price down), so they don't depend on cars as much as we do in America. In China, people pay for healthcare out of pocket, because there was no national health care plans like in the United states. And if that meant families lived together to save money, then that might help keeps the family together better than the American family.

Other countries don't seem to ask as much from their governemt as we do.

True Happiness in the New Millennium

you keep asking for a big brother and I'm here to set you straight you want someone to wipe your noses for you well, pick up the damn tissue and do it yourself because when you give up your rights, you take away mine and we're not having any of that

I say it again towards the end of the poem:

you're looking for peace in all the wrong places you're asking your leaders to save you from yourself but your leaders are losers and they're worse off than you

Maybe if we are able to communicate with one another, maybe *then* we could answer all of our own questions.

Communication

because now that we have the information superhighway we can throw out into the open our screams, our cries for help so much faster than we could before

but what if we don't want to communicate or forget how too busy leaving messages, voice mails, emails, pager numbers forgetting to call back

what if we forget how to communicate?

because now that we have the information superhighway we can throw out into the open our screams, our cries for help so much faster than we could before

but then the question begs itself: who is there to listen?



painting by Dave Jarvie









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