WAÇPE ŁSIZHEBE (TRANQUIL ENTRY)
(MAY 2012)
Now is the Moment

Tradition transformed
Ritual renewed
A sacred transition
No turning back
Quietly step
Under the archway
Into the sanctuary
Leaving all cares behind

Escape the chaos
Now is the moment
To arrive safely held
Realizing tomorrow’s a dream and…
Yesterday’s gone

Evening Prayer (for Dad)

The prophetic match lit the cedar stick.
The glass bell chimed once.
The slow dance began.

Then the patter of raindrops
Tapped on the windowpane.
Could they wash away the wayward blood?

The cedar smoke rose and finally disappeared.
That’s when the thunder
Roared in confirmation.
**EVENTS BEYOND YOUR CONTROL**

Once the lights are out  
If Bat flies into your room  
Will you be prepared?

Once the lights are out  
If Eel swims into your room  
Will you be prepared?

Once the lights are out  
If Elk walks into your room  
Will you be prepared?

And once the lights have been out a long time…  
When Day breaks into your room  
Will you be prepared?

**AWARENESS DRILL**

The bluish phlox are showing early,  
And a curious chickadee is checking me out,  
As I make the rounds ~  
Inspecting the pussy toes,  
Assessing trail conditions,  
And listening for new arrivals.

As I emerge from the woods,  
My rounds complete,  
The sirens start wailing,  
And their urgent serenade  
Accompanies me all the way back to the car.

As I reach for the door handle,  
Silence again ~  
It is only a test.
The Highway of Souls

If the Milky Way
Is the high way of souls,
On clear, cold nights
When the aurora shimmers
In its changeable hues,
What change in state
Is being celebrated then?

Deep Cleaning

On this trying night,
As I prepare to wash for sleep,
I search out a new bar and unwrap it slowly,
Taking in its sweet scent of summer,
Imbued with the flowers of the tree
That keeps on sprouting from its base.

I look to it to restore my faith in renewal.
But on such a night,
I now doubt that the sweetest spices
Or any Aqua Vitae
Could ever take such fragile things as we
(Ones that do not resprout new limbs when cut),
And cleanse away the pall of char,
Making them glow anew in just one night.

The transformation, if it is to occur at all,
Is not to be watched,
Or timed
Or predicted.
**How You Play the Game**

There were two pair o’ dimes in the kitty.
The hand had just begun.

Which side will hold out the longest?
The one with the deepest pockets, or...
The one with the soundest premise?

**Eagle’s Cry (Death by Lead Repeats)**

Power of poison
Aligned with forces of greed
Now there’s hell to pay

Can the Eagle’s cry
Vanquish this silent axis
And restore the world?

**Detour**

The trail into town
Was blocked this morning
By the perfume of plums so thick
That it even stopped
The hardened runners.
WALKING TO BREAKFAST

A gentle rain at sunrise
In the springtime
Is always welcome
In a dry place

It may not fill the reservoir
But the misty air
Holds promise

SOCIETY MEETING

I opened the wooden door
With a strip of green glass
Alit like a narrow tree
And found a seat
In the half-empty hall

Then the session resumed
The speakers shared
Not only design and findings
But joy and hope
And glimpses of paradise
Emerged from the powerpoint
In ways that made
The whole day worthwhile
A Morning like No Other

The bus rushed along
On the drive to the Table (Mesa).
The sky to the east was clear.
To the west, the cotton clouds were piling up.
The cattle rested in their pasture
Warming in the sun…
Then the coyote jumped.

Mother Night

Mother Night,
Who could want more
Than to sleep
On the 20th Century Limited?

My mother and her mother
Have had its comforts,
Its restful berths.
But I have not.

Whisking over the Hoosier plains
Eight feet up,
Gliding through the darkness…
Why can’t I join them,
Mother Night?
ADVICE FOR NEW LOVERS

Walk the prairie in May.
Pretend that you’re meadow voles
And eat all the ripe strawberries
You find.

Walk the prairie in June.
Pretend that you’re bumblebees
And smell all the roses sweetly
In bloom.

Walk the prairie in July.
Pretend that you’re red foxes
And stride silently through cool sedges
At dusk.

Walk the prairie in August.
Pretend that you’re skippers
And taste the nectar of thistles dancing
In wind.

Walk the prairie in September.
Pretend that you’re young meadowlarks
And balance each other on fenceposts
And sing.

Walk the prairie in October.
Pretend that you’re woodpeckers
And seek out the tall stalks
With galls.

When the first snows fly,
If you’re still together,
You’re no longer new lovers.

What were the scents --
What were the colors --
What were the tastes --
What were the feelings
That most captivated your lover?

Does your lover know yours?
Not so long ago
Nor all that far away,
(It was already suburbia by then)
One warm fall day
The rowanberries beckoned,
There in the front yard
So bright, the clusters,
And so bitter.

'Round back,
The french doors to the deck
Were opened wide,
And, just inside,
On the table sat the bowl,
Freshly filled,
New pecans, new walnuts, new hazels.
What a treat!

The gray squirrel
Sensed the treasure
That sat beyond the deck,
And, finding tranquility, entered,
Paying a brief visit
To the promised land,
Before rushing back to reality,
But not before
Taking one hard piece of evidence
From the other side.
Honor the Bison

One snowy day down at the council grove
The son of Alink’awaho
Fashioned a prayer wheel
With twenty-seven spokes

His alpha was the sacred pipe
His omega, the wise old owl

Ninety-three songs to the world
Songs to the bow
Songs to the deer
Songs to the crow

Honor the bison bull
Honor the sun
Honor the moon
Planting season will be coming soon

His wheel turns in harmony
With the smoky prairie fires
And those sparks still make it spin

Marking

The stag finds just the right saplings to thrash.
The wolf marks certain trunks and rocks along his rounds.
And I make my rounds, too,
Marking each bramble patch by name
With small, white slips of recognition.
A DAY IN THE HILLS

stiff east wind
horizontal rain
spring turkey season

five bold toms
a secretive hen
darts into the woods

pick through rocks
indigo white sage
to climb to the top

from the point
expansive prairie
spanning a county

no elk seen
hiding in the draw
venture out tonight

HEADING WEST

barbed wire scissor tail
an opalescent sunset
seems redder from each ridgetop
must be on the red road now