**Eleven Songs to Light the Kindling**

"Wake Up and Live"

To sleep well, live well
To live well, be fully awake
Master Marley knows when the cock crows

"Hudecké z Bílovic"

The waxy plums are hanging ripe
The sun is shining brightly
It will soon burn off the dew
Run to the orchard
Fill your basket before the wasps awaken...
I’ll fix dumplings for lunch

"Symphony #50, Mount St. Helens"

That hike to the lake was so refreshing
And gave us just the balance needed
To withstand the immense explosion of magma
And be forged anew

"Es ist ein Ros entsprungen"

Rosa sempervirens
This fragile, fragrant bud
Lies waiting in our hearts
When we truly know it
No frost can stop its bloom

"Cortège from Mlada Suite"

Dress in your most beautiful clothes
Stand tall
Find your place – the lines are forming
The procession will not wait for long

"Svyatyj Bozhe"

Each voice alone sings its part
Yet together they drink from the deepest well
And float above the highest clouds
The prism that splits the sounds into high and low
Also focuses the sunlight to flame
"La Tarara"
Transcendental CPR
The rhythm of Tarara’s walk
Will set a man’s heart apounding

"Ej Hora, Hora"
How can you keep from dancing
Along the path that follows the creek
Up the mountainside?
Faster and faster you go
Jumping boulders and windfalls
Set ablaze by the spirits of outlaws
And billygoats

"South Breeze"
The south breeze is soft
Graceful, flowing through leaves
Slowly warming them
Nearly stopping now
Then gently shaking again
Making two leaves meet

"Já Sei Namorar"
The fusion reactor nearly perfected
Operational now
Bodies can remain at rest no more

"Elk"
His high notes fly through the miles
Like arrows with no gravity
When they find their mark
A blue flame erupts
WAITING FOR THE INSPECTOR

The night rains have passed.
New birds are singing.
Painted ladies and red admirals alight on yellow blossoms
(Never seen in this garden before)
Flitting from one to the next.
Is it time to say goodbye?

Farewell to the kale;
Farewell to the kohlrabi;
They must remain.

The butterflies, like memories,
Can fly away, free.

DREAMCATCHER

Empty nest…
Time to train for chasing dreams.
She’s taking motorcycle lessons.
With the right bike,
She might just catch some.

BIOFUEL RESEARCH

The fire in sage
Is for sanctification
The fire in us
Is for illumination

Should I ask my chemist friends
Which seeds to press
To make the oil
That burns brightest?

And then should I eat those seeds
Or find a press?
IT WAS A GOOD SIGN

The dark miles southward sped by,
Unnoticed through the night.
Then the bus pulled off the interstate
And made its way into the still dark town.

I gathered my things
And stepped onto the pavement,
Watching a town slowly awaken with the sunrise.

I surveyed the quiet shops and churches,
As the dawn slowly broke,
And the edge of the sun could be seen
Straight down the street.

I walked west
Through the park where every red bird
Tried to outdo its neighbor.

Little did I know then
That this song-filled sanctuary
Would soon become my home.

HER BIRCHES

Desirous to remake the World
Into our own image,
Oblivious of the sacred songs
Flowing from each place...
Foolish sins, mostly unremarked

The gray-cheeked thrush
Must know something of this,
As he just landed outside my window.

MEDITATION V

Data » Prose » Creative Graph
Intangibles » Poetry » Painting

Concept » Narrative » Visualization
Two Blind Dates

Funny how long it can take
For imperfect symmetries to play out

Two blind dates ~ four decades apart
Friends of friends ~ both from the West

One living by the lake with Saint Mary
The other just up the road

One who loves the snow
The other wanting a warmer land

The darker one from the land of Mescalero
The lighter one from the land of Beehives

A student of confidence, having walked many paths
A student of confidence, starting her first walk alone

A stuffy dinner at "the best place in town"
   spoiled by a sloppy chef
A light supper under the evening sky
No errors there
**Physical Therapy**

You find the right beat  
And have the house to yourself  
Dance the pain away

**A Question for the I Ching**

In the time of greed  
The ancient storehouse of sharing is mined  
Proprietary supplants the common good  
Caches plundered, pockets lined  
Where will this dialectic lead next?

**A Short Fantasy on the Origins of Bebop**

Back in the city of fountains,  
Alone and sober (this time),  
The air is thick.

The only lights are streetlamps,  
The glow of apartment windows,  
And a few stars in a cloudless gap.

On the boulevard parkway,  
The ghosts of rabbits spar  
With the ghosts of goats long passed.

And behind me,  
A hot trumpet riff echoes up Vine.
To Make Sense of the Ashes

Carl told us, in no uncertain terms,
That the past is a bucket of ashes.
Yet from William’s tempest came the news
That the past is prologue.

Must we all become archaeologists
To reconcile these truths
And find our way?

Cultivate Balance

Initiative
Without receptivity
Spoils the dance
And what else is there?

Whenever We Meet

My friend, whenever we meet and embrace,
I can’t help but recall
Her autumn cravings for some well-smoked pork,
A lean slice of hickoried brisket,
Or some slivers of swiss touched by the warmth of wood.
How can I ever repay you?
**Pickup Trucks & Wild Mares**

Look at all those shiny pickups  
Lined up with their high falootin’ names and numbers.  
Do you want to buy a Titan  
Or mabe a supercharged Ram?  
(Sounds like trouble brewin’ to me...)

I think I’ll take that old, beat-up brown Tarpan  
at the back of the lot.  
Looks like she’s stood the test of time,  
Out in rough brush and dusty grass,  
Runnin’ from one windswept ridge to the next.

With some special attention,  
I’ll bet she’d be a fun ride.

**Pavement Ends**

No welcoming rainbow  
No warning thunderbolt  
Only the passing of disinterested jackrabbits  
With their lean, lanky strides

**The Artist’s Eye**

It caught her eye,  
The smooth, slightly tanned hand  
Set off with a crisp, beige oxford cuff  
And a little gold with lapis.  
She thought to herself ~  
I’d love to draw that hand.
Unfettered Dreams

Dreaming must flow freely
In the terraced garden,
Vortex rising unfettered
In black and white and pink.
No whirlwind preconceived
Ever goes beyond a dust devil.

So set aside those notions –
Place trust in the subconscious.
All that’s needed is already planted.
Real clarity may emerge from that twister,
Keenly aware of the nightdream and its passing.

Only Among Friends

There we were, the three of us,
Jack, Bill, and me,
Down at Jalisco’s,
Enjoying our drinks last Friday night.
The tacos were soon to come.
Somehow, the conversation turned to wiring,
motors and the mechanical world,
And (wouldn’t you know?) all three of us were
pretty well clueless.
Thank God our wives all knew the better of it.
**NOT THE BEST ADVICE**

The foolish boy was hungry,
He made his way to town,
But the main road was all torn up,
And half the shops were dark.

He saw the barber’s light was on
And walked inside to find out more.
He paid no heed to the sign out front,
"Coyote Wore Sideburns."

~ Foolish boy

**THE ANALOGY BREAKS DOWN**

When we were growing up,
We all knew that bureaucratic bear,
Who taught us well how to kill a fire.
He did not truly trust us.
Over and over, he told us:
The fires we set must wholly be extinguished.

Yet there are all sorts of flames.
The ones we set for daily needs
Burn beside some others, the holy ones.
Extinguishing them is dangerous work,
Not to be done routinely.

Now forget the bear.
Remember:
A few sparks from the special flames
Should always be kept alive.
**Annie Oakley Reincarnate**

She loves to ride  
She loves to shoot  
Rifle, shotgun, loves ’em both  
Ready for a day in the saddle  
Or a long, cold hunt  
At the drop of a hat  

But most of all  
She loves the white smoke  
Of a prairie burn  
And seems driven to find  
The indian grass world  
Now hidden by trees and cornstalks

**Yakshi**

Such a strange spring  
Nothing quite in its right time  
This morning the waxwings were whistling  
Asking for you from the tree tops  
Wanting their red berries already  
Can you help them?  

I know it’s a bit presumptious of me  
We haven’t even met  
But I sense you’ve been watching  
From the well-rooted trees down by the creek

If you see a young elk  
Please send him my way  
Once the time is right