

From My Driveway  
You Can See The Moon

~

Jerry Katz

copyright © 2003 Jerry Katz

**Nonduality Salon Press**  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
ndspress@nonduality.com

All rights reserved.

## **Contents**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| From My Driveway You Can See The Moon                             | 6  |
| Seen on the road  | 7  |
| i went with my brother's family of four                           | 8  |
| What I've been saying is that when a person does something        | 9  |
| Solitude and simplicity are healing.                              | 10 |
| A Touch. A Breeze.  | 11 |
| when you think of the world                                       | 13 |
| Wherever you are, look at something very nearby                   | 14 |
| I was on a walk to the waterfront and stopped to buy some incense | 15 |
| Remember the breeze.  | 17 |
| What's most real  | 18 |
| I said to someone yesterday that it was a new moon.               | 19 |
| People read these things looking for ... what?                    | 20 |
| One of the great moments of my life                               | 21 |
| The NOW sees the halting of the endless train known as thought.   | 22 |
| I had a Great-uncle who had been in the silk business             | 23 |
| You know what?  | 24 |
| Everyone's trying to say something.                               | 25 |
| Nonduality Street   | 26 |
| All Scriptures swiped off the desk                                | 27 |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| a message was written on the wall                                  | 28 |
| I'm suffering when I start allowing people and events<br>to tether | 31 |
| Written on and following September 11, 2001                        | 32 |
| The question to ask, for me  | 33 |
| Someone asked me tonight, over pizza                               | 34 |
| It's good to face the dragon.                                      | 35 |
| If you know you lost your way                                      | 36 |
| they live in the cellar  | 37 |
| so you've been brushed aside                                       | 39 |
| Some things  | 40 |
| There was that old weedy lot                                       | 41 |
| Free at last   | 42 |
| Find this on your map of consciousness and stick<br>a pin in it    | 43 |
| Have you ever not known what you want to do                        | 44 |
| In Hebrew School I never listened and failed every test.           | 45 |
| When I was told I had e-q-u-a-n-i-m-i-t-y                          | 46 |
| this is my poem with the word beloved in it                        | 47 |
| if i can see   | 49 |
| If you have food, give it.   | 50 |
| You just took a breath.  | 51 |
| To live fully and be wise  | 55 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| from the Owner's Manual of the Isuzu Zen car            | 56 |
| a fragile wooden cat                                    | 57 |
| I remember the day I got drunk                          | 58 |
| Ramona hot-glued big paper flowers                      | 59 |
| I was in a complex of buildings all attached.           | 60 |
| Hey. I just realized something.                         | 61 |
| I go walking about the world                            | 62 |
| Two who argued about who was enlightened                | 63 |
| Okay, so I remember who I am. But I forget Willie Mays. | 64 |
| you're in your room                                     | 66 |
| I remember one day in the early 70's                    | 67 |

## **From My Driveway You Can See The Moon**

Remember when that comet was here?

You could see it from my driveway.

Part of me thought everyone in the world  
Would be making a pilgrimage to my driveway.

(It only holds two cars.)

That's kind of how spiritual teachers work.  
They prepare a nice driveway  
Decorated with flowers, beautiful music, and incense,

Only to point to what anyone can see from their own  
driveway.

I can see the moon from my driveway.

Quick, before all the hotels are booked!  
Rush to Nova Scotia if you want to see

the MOON

**Seen on the road**

Spirituality

is like endless billboards

in the desert

announcing a desert

up ahead

without billboards

**i went with my brother's family of four**  
to the krispy kreme in los angeles.

they gave each one of us a free donut while we waited to  
order.

we ordered a dozen. so we got 17.  
and we ate them all.

i loved the girl who handed out the free donuts  
warm from the deep fryer and glaze shower.

she has one of the great jobs humanity has ever known.

her handing out of one donut  
is as inspirational as any human gesture ever was.

**What I've been saying is that when a person does something**, it seems like a natural thing to ask why it's being done and who's asking.

That's why I never followed any teacher or teaching, I guess, because I was always stuck at those questions.

When I was a kid my mother always wanted me to join the cub scouts, the boy scouts, the girl scouts. Anything. Go out, she would say. Join something.

Even my late wife used to tell me to join something. Join the elks, she would say, the lions, the antelope, the girl scouts. I always asked why I had to join. There was no reason to join anything. Everything was okay right here.

Now i'm 52 years old and live by myself in a little room. And I know this girl who says, Get out, join something, buy a condo, get married, make something of your life.

It just doesn't seem like the right thing for me.

**Solitude and simplicity are healing.**

Even in the midst of pain and confusion, healing happens like the morning sun rising, blazing through the window and onto your face.

The obviousness of everything is seen and all you can do is laugh.

## **A Touch. A Breeze.**

When I was at the Inner Directions gathering in March of 2001, I noticed that certain speakers would invite the audience into a meditation. You would hear shuffling as many in the audience of 500 adjusted sitting positions all at once.

When it was Adyashanti's turn to speak, he made the same invitation toward meditation, except that he asked everyone to sit exactly as they were and not to shift in their seats. You didn't hear a sound. If a person were listening to that silence, that absence of shuffling, something could have been learned.

First, it would have been noted that 'not shuffling' was not different than 'shuffling'. One can imagine that some people were shuffling in their minds, saying, "I mustn't change my seating position. He wants me to meditate so I have to think about what I've been taught or grab my mantra, or... ." Can you hear the mental shuffling?

Second, looking at the silence symbolically, a person could have learned that meditation requires nothing be done other than know reality. There's no reason to be excessive in the movement toward that. To dwell on the movement is to put off meditation. And almost any movement of the body or mind is excessive.

When we were teenagers, my brothers and I had an inexpensive telescope set upon a tripod. We would take it onto the roof of our apartment house in Santa Monica and look at the moon. It was not the most sturdy telescope, so if it were tapped slightly, the field of view changed to something billions of miles beyond.

Meditation requires a movement that slight. A tap. Nothing more. The whole field of view changes from so-called normal life with its moods, joys, pains, remembrances and values, to the taste of reality.

Adyashanti, as I understand him, was saying that very little need be done to enter meditation. A change in seating position won't help.

What is the slight tap required? To spend time describing it is to bring a person into the movement itself and to depart from why the movement is being done.

What does it take to tap the telescope? Not much. A touch. A breeze.

There is no need to change body or mental posture. There is no need to move toward something, because that 'something' might be a remembrance, or a device to gain remembrance, but it is not going to be the taste of reality.

Like Adyashanti, I am giving nothing. Watch. Is there the desire for a method at this point? A need for a way to relax, or a breathing technique? A mantra?

Watch, because there may be a slipping away from the taste of reality. Want large sweeping movements? Shuffling in the seat? In the mind?

The invitation is to be exactly as one is. Then the tap -- some might say it is the touch, the breeze of Grace -- and reality is known. That is meditation.

**when you think of the world**

you become reborn into it

when you hold on to being

you hold on to being born

dying to the world means being without the concept of  
being

looking back only to watch your chest go up and down

be on your death bed

think of nothing

look back

your chest goes up and down

your body gets up and goes about its business

but you

you have died to it

and have found your freedom from it

let the world play

see, it's a small thing

**Wherever you are, look at something very nearby**, a foot or so away -- it could be a wall, a picture, a tree, a car, whatever -- and focus on as small as speck of material as possible. That 'single point chosen', the suchness of it being seen, shines forth like a wise Master. It's significance is ultimate.

When this practice is done with eyes closed and the inner vision focused on a speck of light in the center of the field of vision, it becomes a third eye practice, and occult knowledge and powers can be gained.

In time, when one has really moved into nonduality, whatever that means, the practice can't be conducted, because everything is the ultimate significant particle. I used to practice it as a kid while my teenage friends were talking about hot combing their hair and forming a band called the Continentals. It was 1963, and there were already 14,751 bands called The Continentals.

In New Jersey.

Though I was a fairly well-socialized kid with good friends, those tiny particles were my best friends. Because they held reality.

And the other reason i'm writing is to see if anyone knows whatever happened to The Continentals?

**I was on a walk to the waterfront and stopped to buy some incense.** There is absolutely no one where I go on the waterfront. I sit on the black asphalt pier and watch the harbour.

I lit a stick of the incense and placed it in the little round ceramic holder that comes in the box. The ingredients of the incense are listed: "sandalwood, frankincense, cinnamon, ginger lily, nardostachys, rhizoma, and spices."

Across the wide harbour and in my line of vision was the Irving oil refinery. Its chimneys stood tall and skinny like sticks of incense. Thick white smoke was spewing out of one of the chimneys. My senses were taken by the incense which the breeze kindly brought to my breathed air. I wrote:

*i sit  
light a stick  
of incense*

*across the harbour  
a single tall thin chimney*

*two clouds of smoke*

*one wind*

On the way home I stopped at the Farmer's Market. At one stand an elderly Taiwanese man sells sushi, spring rolls, egg rolls, noodles, dumplings, soup. I always buy a hand roll and find a place in the alley outside to eat. Today he had sold out. So I bought hot tofu dumplings.

I went into the alley and climbed an iron staircase leading to a door that is never used. I sat on the floor of the landing. I could see the tops of apartment buildings and their balconies with no one sitting on them on one of the nicest mornings of the year.

People were passing through the alley to and from the market. Vendors were bringing empty boxes to the trash, unloading vehicles, carrying goods. Shoppers were pausing to smoke. A father had brought his son outside to scold him. I composed:

*ginger, tofu, mushrooms, scallions, garlic  
what else goes into this delectable dumpling?*

*i take small bites*

*though it's skin is thin  
the ingredients are held in place.*

Then I walked home and got ready to go out with Kelly. She was talking about us getting engaged. We watched a movie called Panic, a very good dark comedy. Afterward we were both depressed about getting married. She had been influenced by the movie. I had been influenced by dreams of being poor and alone.

### **Remember the breeze**

When I was in the eighth grade in New Jersey, on warm days we'd go out for recess and we boys would come back to class all sweaty and restless, unable to focus on schoolwork.

Mrs. Convey, a firmly built and well-figured woman with clipped movements and strong peppery-flowery perfume that I can still smell (I liked it), would open the windows wide (with that long pole with the hook at the end) and insist that if we sat still and quiet we would cool off faster than if we kept thrashing around wiping sweat off, fanning ourselves, unbuttoning our shirts, arguing in whispers about the game we'd just played outdoors.

Because she was a respected, strong-willed teacher, and we were good kids, we listened, and we cooled off faster by keeping still, silent, and remembering the breeze.

**What's most real**

Is the part of you that always questions what's real.

You need to recognize your power.

Be patient and good to yourself.

Whatever you're going through is training for something else.

That witness of confusion is a good place to take refuge.

It's a place of strength.

**I said to someone yesterday that it was a new moon.** He said, no, it was a full moon. I pointed to the calendar and said, Look, it is a new moon! He said, I was just outside and it is a full moon!

Well I guess it's easier to stay indoors with the wisdom of the ages engraved on walls than to go outdoors and face the engravings in the sky.

**People read these things looking for ... what?** Sometimes you need to come home to a homemade hot meal, apple pie with vanilla ice cream melting on top of it, and to relax for a couple of hours. Then you go off to a nice comfortable bed for a good night's sleep. In the morning everything looks different. And there's left-over apple pie for breakfast.

**One of the great moments of my life** was when I was God knows how young and I was sitting in the corner of a room with a marble and there was a little hole drilled into the hardwood floor, and I noticed that the marble sat perfectly within the hole. I felt I'd discovered something tremendous. I felt like God.

**The NOW sees the halting of the endless train known as thought.**

The stopping of the train, the halting of its pressure and noise, is an immediate relief, and one is energized by it. The world, then, takes on a completely different look, and, later, the words used to describe it are known to be sacred hobos on that extraordinary train.

**I had a Great-uncle who had been in the silk business** in Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson was the silk capital of the world, until synthetics were invented. Then what happened to silk? Today silk is hardly a necessity. It is a luxury.

I caught up to Bernie in the early 70's when polyester was the rage and young studs like myself wore these see-through gaudily designed shirts.

I said, "Bernie, feel this shirt, it's like silk!"

He said, "You call that silk? What do you know from silk all of a sudden?"

"Everyone says it's just like silk!."

"How do you know? You've seen the real McCoy?"

"I don't think so," I said.

"So? Enough! I don't want hear about it."

**You know what?** I'm so sick of hearing about being conditioned and reacting and our false selves and what's wrong with us, that I really don't give a damn. SO WHAT if I'm conditioned and react and all that? So what? To worry about it, to acknowledge it, to improve it, isn't any better than having it. The problem is that people suffer it. People suffer it and then they suffer getting rid of it. And then they suffer its absence and then they suffer their coming realizations.

The problem is the suffering of it. Not it. I'm sure I've done all kinds of crazy things in my life, but one understanding has never changed since the age of 7. I AM. That plainly shines forth. It is Being. And everything else falls into place. Why crunch the gravel on the path, when one stone, quiet and whole, awaits attention?

**Everyone's trying to say something.**

English is nobody's first language.

Be still.

Return to your original language.

## **Nonduality Street**

We bring our cooking utensils,  
journals, jokes,  
pets, ancestors, sizzling DNA,

and find a room on the Street.

We unravel to the emptiness  
while sitting peacefully on a bench in the park  
alongside the lake,  
and while negotiating the crowded sidewalk  
perfumed with ethnic  
garlic.

Even as so many of us walk  
stone-faced  
past each other,

there's enough said in the passing  
to be taken for bows of mutuality.

Because at night, late at night,  
all is quiet in rooms,  
and mostly quiet on Nonduality Street.

And come morning,  
morning is simply known as morning.  
It is cool in the city of consciousness.

A fan does not turn.

**All Scriptures swiped off the desk, I find only my elbows  
on it.**

**a message was written on the wall**

in your room  
you would read it every day  
go out into the world  
and live by the message  
the smiles you sent came back to you  
no one ever saw such a smile  
a smile to a stranger on the street  
they might turn and follow you  
back home  
there was the message on the wall  
which no one ever saw  
but everyone heard your version  
and got their version  
and spread that version  
until the time no wall  
was without a version of the message on the wall in your  
room  
then you bought some plywood

took out your carpentry tools  
the box was simple  
but covered the message  
the door locked  
with a key you couldn't get duplicated  
at the shoemaker's  
and that was that.

so life went on  
you became famous  
and the message stayed in the box  
you hardly opened it anymore  
in fact it was enough to look at the box  
soon you started building versions  
of the box that holds the message  
that you looked at every day  
and which held something that everyone could have  
so of course people built their version  
and spread that version  
and soon shops all over were selling  
versions of the box that held the message  
that was never revealed  
and whose versions  
have been covered over  
by versions  
of the box

that covers  
the original message  
that you've forgotten

by now millions of people had been killed  
or abused  
because of things having to do  
with the box.  
but that's just peoples' ways  
it's always been that way  
people need to respect each other's box  
that's all there is to it.  
there should be freedom to build whatever box you want  
as long as it doesn't hurt anyone  
plus we need to kill others to keep our freedom to build our  
boxes  
and to kill those whose boxes we're not supposed to like  
sort of thing  
you know what I'm saying  
okay.

fine.

then one day someone tells you your hair is mussed up  
and you're ugly  
well you don't believe it  
but you don't have a mirror either  
so you put a mirror on the box that covers the original  
message  
on the wall.  
now when you look at the box  
you look at yourself  
every day  
until you can't stand it  
and you tear down the box  
you don't understand the message  
anymore  
you look out the window  
you see buildings that look like versions of the box  
you take your hammer to the plaster  
until the message and a big sheet of wall  
have crumbled down.

but oh it's only the world  
you've heard there are places where the box isn't built  
but you don't know how to get there  
and as for now  
well this won't do  
so you rebuild the wall  
put up a box  
any box  
that you buy in one of the shops  
and all is well

not really though  
it occurs to you that  
there may be lots of people  
who put up boxes because it's the right thing to do  
but they don't see the need for them  
any more than you do  
so you start asking people whether they really want their  
box up  
and they're polite  
and all  
and say of course they do  
but now you've opened something  
you sense you've opened the original box  
and for a moment you remember the original message  
but then it's gone  
and it isn't long after that they've killed you anyway

there are still men, women and mostly children in rooms  
sitting in front of blank walls  
when a message appears  
there always were  
always  
and will be  
and it's really not anything worth making as much a fuss  
about  
as people have

**I'm suffering when I start allowing people and events to tether** themselves to the experience of body/mind tensions that show up constantly.

If I focus on the tension itself, it goes away, and the slate is clean. Not that I always succeed.

There's a tension, it is what it is, it goes away, it comes and goes. Life isn't all the things that glom onto those tensions and one's dealings with them, although one would think so.

## **Written on and following September 11, 2001**

The only thing they don't show in the Godzilla movies is where people run to. Where they end up. They end up in gun shops, on nonduality street, in purgatory apartments, drug stores, and in brightly lit chicken soup kitchens with family where everything is okay. And everything is okay, isn't it?

~ ~ ~

If one finds a cloak of being has risen out of the ashes, its perfectly okay to do nothing but wear it. It's there for a purpose and because it's heavy, it's easy to wear. In time it goes and one is left to the essence 'within'. But men seek that risen cloak. They may as look upward for the risen towers.

**The question to ask, for me,** is not what the meaning and purpose of suffering is, but, What is the ultimate division that I harbour, what are its manifold expressions and how are they reflected in the universe? Before trying to explain what I see, I need to see what I see.

**Someone asked me tonight, over pizza,** whether I was afraid of dying. My impulse was to answer 'No'. But I caught myself. Was that MY answer now or from another time? Really it wasn't my answer. Everything has to be questioned. Every hypnosis has to be penetrated to find a lesser hypnosis, every trance to find a shallower trance, every mask to find one closer to the bone.

**It's good to face the dragon.** It's also good to run from it once in a while and end up in a restaurant with a piece of hot pie in front of you.

**If you know you lost your way,**  
then part of you must still know the way.

That part of you understands everything  
and will always be there for you,  
waiting.

You'll find your way again.

**they live in the cellar**

you've seen the light in the cellar  
through the cracks in the floorboards

you've seen movement  
through the cracks in the floorboards

after you lock your doors  
and go away

they unlock them

you come home

your computer  
and the things you've saved  
all your life  
are gone

you sit in an empty home

you see movement in the light  
coming through the cracks  
in the floorboards

they're coming upstairs

they have three horns  
one protruding from each temple  
and one in the center of the forehead

you want to strike one  
hard  
for all they've done to you

but he hugs you sensitively  
and looks into your eyes  
with a mocking sadness

they go back to the cellar

all you can do  
is go shopping

and yell at them  
to keep the doors locked

when you go away

**so you've been brushed aside**

and in the process  
you've fallen onto the pavement and  
scraped your groucho glasses and nose  
the collar with the two long plastic arms sticking out to the  
sides  
the four pens in your mouth  
the hollow umbrella handle  
stuck over the pens and through your mouth  
so somehow you can suck  
nearly poisonous leaves through it  
and live somehow

you were brushed aside  
and all the stuff stuck into, on and around you  
got scraped and clattered on the pavement

you're like the duck they found  
on lake banook  
an arrow shot right through it  
yet it paddled along and even flew

but i have never seen a little bird like you

so what's happened little bird?

what happened nearly happened so many times before  
but the leaves were enough to sustain you

now you have no energy  
you can't get away  
from the man who comes up to you  
and pulls the umbrella handle  
and pens out of your mouth  
takes the collar with its arms from around your neck  
and lifts the groucho glasses from your eyes

you are so stunned  
you don't know how you can go on

so free, so strong, so actual  
and raw.

## **Some things**

\*

What is real has nothing to do with a thing valued.

\*

The Middle Path is a point at first, then a corridor, then the universe, then Grace.

\*

Attend to the suchness of everything.

**There was that old weedy lot** up around 28th St. and 16th Ave. in Paterson. One corner of it was taken up by an auto repair place that souped-up shiny fin-singing '57 Chevy's and the like. One spring day a few of us kids were standing in the weeds and someone said, "See if you can find the turtle."

The kids went on talking about something else, but I went walking, kicking through the weeds. I didn't go far when, right at my feet, a low mound of earth surrounded by horseweed and dandelions moved. It was big, like one of those turtles you might see floating in a glass jar at the museum.

I didn't say a word to the other kids. Never did. I needed to keep it to myself because it was like a discovery I couldn't explain anyway.

After forty years, I still make a point of walking through weedy areas. It's like a ritual already. Along railroad tracks. Ragweed and milkweed. Empty lots. The good people who don't cut their lawns, and have an old rusted car from the 50's sitting out front. But, honestly, I don't think about the turtle anymore. I've forgotten to remember it. Which is the way it should be. That way when I come across it, it'll be like a tremendous Zen moment, right?

**Free at last**

Now that the Worship Service is over  
I go outside  
And stand in the sun  
Which lights the real House of Worship  
The fumes of the passing bus smell like incense of the  
House of Worship  
Litter gathers at the grating alongside the corner store  
Like pages of the real Book of Worship  
The 1961 baseball season is just beginning  
Like three or four Holy Months

New Jersey has perfect days in the Spring  
That are still, just warm, with flowers coming up  
My mother waited on the porch for us to come home from  
school  
(Her youthful smile!)  
Only in the Spring

Yes, I could hold onto this today  
While playing stickball with kids on the block  
While getting ready for supper  
While eating chicken noodle soup on the tv table and  
watching the Three Stooges  
While going outside later and trying to get close to the  
blonde girl across the street who wore Intimate  
While pretending to go to sleep but staying up late listening  
to the transistor  
Hold onto my seat in this House of Worship  
Today

But tomorrow?  
I needed the false House of Worship to show me the true  
one.  
I needed the bondage of school and Religion to know  
freedom.  
I needed to be dragged to the False in order to know who I  
was.

**Find this on your map of consciousness and stick a pin in it:** The empty space in which nothing is known, is a place without details, form, shape, feel, without anything that can be described accurately -- to say an I lives there is to say there is an I to fill that space.

In that space, questions and answers are the same. This place of emptiness and being is a place of fullness. It is full of the womb of existence. Out of it everything comes and into it one can reach and pull out what is needed. Any feeling of power, higher consciousness, god, is not it, it is only something you sang a lullaby to. It is more existence. More sleep.

You say there are relationships, responsibilities. Look at what you're looking after. Realize how you brought the unreleasables into your life. Realize that they are like rashes on your skin or inflammation within your body. See how they have arisen. Bear witness to them.

Don't just intellectually know or understand this, but actually recognize it. Don't merely pick-up on the scent of the trail that intuition traverses, but clutch and be clutched. When you go beyond knowing to where knowledge knows you, you see the dance between you and the source of you.

If you are now struggling with situations in life in a way that arises out of failing to see beyond intellectual recognition and understanding, then you will be led down avenues that seem to promise release. Be aware of the opening of any avenue and of any strolling along the avenue. The best avenues will be named 'you' and the neighborhood will look exactly as your life does now.

Look up. The dome of the sky is the empty space in which nothing is known, a place without details, form, shape, feel, without anything that can be described accurately -- to say an I lives there is to say there is an I to fill that space. Look at your map of consciousness now, baby. All the pins are gone.

**Have you ever not known what you want to do**, but were happy doing nothing?

And people close to you are nicely urging you to do something?  
Or not so nicely?

But you were happy and there was nothing to do?

No one needing your attention and nothing hard to do or to bear?

And all there is are these adjustments that some call commitments, callings, non-doings, but you know them as adjustments?

And as you're making adjustments, you know you're like a pitcher in the bullpen waiting to be called in to pitch?

Or waiting to be born?

Have you ever felt distant from what's on CNN  
And close to reality television?

Have you watched things happen and really have to strain to see them happen? Like, for example, just about anything?

Are you exactly the same while dreaming and while awake?

And isn't the comfort world burning  
In a dish  
And the dish hot  
And on your lap  
And with a little adjustment  
You remain cool  
Knowing the iceberg  
Is on its way  
To meet it?

**In Hebrew School I never listened and failed every test.**

As much as I could, I stared out the window and watched busses stop and people depart and get on. Sometimes I would catch the instant the streetlight turn on.

The busses named Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, were the color of classroom air, absent engine sounds and street fumes. They never lit up brightly for a lady in a winter coat.

One day I ran into my Hebrew School teacher, the Rabbi, at the corner candy store. What was he doing there? It didn't make any sense that he would appear in the world outside the classroom window. But there he was, wearing all black, with his black tie and neat mustache, buying a newspaper. I didn't like it at all, but for a second everything made sense. The two worlds could co-exist.

Like I said, the insight only lasted a second. I continued to stare out the classroom window. The only difference was that now I could admit to myself that more than watching the busses and the people, I wanted to be surprised by the turning on of the streetlight.

**When I was told I had  
e-q-u-a-n-i-m-i-t-y**

I baked a cake.

Brought out hats and whistles

The girl next door  
And her mom with the big floppy hat

Instant coffee

Fred, Jim, Raj,

Two dogs that chased each other

The tattoo artist

A guy whose bird flew out the window

Everyone got sick on cake.  
There was no Cremora for the coffee.

The tattoo artist hurt everyone

The girl next door died in my arms

The dogs ran away

A record got stuck

And that guy went on about how his bird had flown away.

Everyone was bummed out

**this is my poem  
with the word**

**beloved**

**in it**

you're going to hear about  
mythological  
things  
and really very historical  
things

and some woman or female thing  
high above me  
in a flowing robe

i'll be getting to that part soon  
once i decide whether she has fairy dust  
around her  
or not

so this is my poem with the word  
beloved  
in it

and i hope you like it so far

this is my mention of planets  
and astrological things

ok i got that out of the way

and this is the part where i mention  
that my heart  
is overflowing with love  
and the love becomes a fountain  
or a bird  
or some other animal

right about now my  
beloved  
has to come into the picture again.

ya know, you can't go too long without  
bringing the beloved back into the picture.  
you know what i'm saying.

i guess i'm supposed to mention clouds too.

does the beloved ever pick up the check?

oh man, saved by the bell.  
that's my chick on the phone.  
gotta split

**if i can see**

that man's adornment

including all the theories of physics

and all wars

is so that

one bird

unadorned

can rest on a wire

then I can sit in silence

and let all things sit

unadorned

on a wire

**If you have food, give it.**

It doesn't need the hands of a world class chef on it.

Anyone who has the food and can somehow prepare it, will do, and there are many.

Spiritual teachings should good and cheap in the streets like trucks in Nova Scotia that sell fish and chips, or those lunch trucks in Los Angeles that sell the best soft tacos you ever had.

Keeping it authentic, working within your capabilities give it.

**You just took a breath.**

You feel that nothing satisfies -- no religion, no life style, no people, no amount of money, nothing.

You consider yourself a spiritual person, yet nothing spiritual satisfies or seems final enough.

Beauty is not enough. Someone else's beauty is not your knowing. Someone else's knowing is not your beauty.

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing...is 'it'.

You sense that you are imprisoned, even though you may be free in ways multitudes would envy.

Something's being held back. Held back from you and held back from the people that come close to saying what you are waiting to hear.

Famous people are coming close to saying it, to filling your need, but they won't.

Deepak Chopra, The Dalai Lama, and Oprah are coming close, but for some reason they won't tell you what you need to hear.

Meanwhile your fridge is full, your plate is full, your mouth is full, and you are hungry.

Your mind is full, and you are hungry.

And no one is telling you the core truth.

Either you are recognizing what I am saying, or you are not.

Either you are being drawn to a whisper of something utterly final that you intuit,

or you are wandering in a spiritual cloud that uses you to seed it

so there can rain chicken soup for the soul over a mass of nice people.

You are being drawn to the edge of your world, or you are skating at the slippery edge and not sure about what you might fall into.

Everything as you have known it, is breaking down, coming to its end, dying.

Everything you hear is dead men talking.

This is the end. And this is the beginning.

Who are you?

Who.....are you?

Who.....

Who.....

Who ... are ... you?

Who are you?

Have noticed that the bars of your prison include everything?

Is there anything that is not prison material?

Can you point to one thing that is the core truth that you can almost taste?

Has any quote from any famous person ever satisfied you?

Has any person, action, book, or practice ever freed you?

Has any list of .... things.... ever done a bit of good when it comes to bringing you to where you know you need to be going?

Everything is prison bars.

When all's said and done, and when what I have to say is finished, there will be nothing for you to join or do.

Nothing will ever be the same again.

You will be out of prison.

If it's time to eat, you get up and make dinner.

You intuit this thing. You know you are not being told what is ultimate.

You know that nothing holds up.

You don't want to know what someone else has experienced or learned.

You don't want to read another quote or see another list.

You want to cut to the core of you, whoever you are.

Because it is there that the answer lies.

Wherever that is.

You want nothing brought to you.

You don't want a nice setting and graciousness.

You don't want another poem, another quote, another list

Or another person's life story.

You don't want a problem solved.

You don't want money, sex, or religion.

You don't want things to do to fill the time when there is nothing.

You want to know this 'nothing',

And then to let your life arise out of that.

But you want it done without it being done.  
You don't want to be told how to achieve it.  
You don't want to be told how to enter this nothingness  
Which seems to represent the core truth  
That nobody's talking about.  
Because you've been told crap all your life  
And none of it means anything right now.  
Not a word of it is known right now.

**To live fully and be wise**, may mean to be comfortable with wonder.

**from the Owner's Manual of the Isuzu Zen car:**

adjust your windshield wipers

until the speed of the rain

is just right

**a fragile wooden cat**

i have

fell off the shelf

and its leg broke

i put it back on the shelf

standing it on three legs

it looked more beautiful

**I remember the day I got drunk** and flung open the doors to the ladies room. Wait a minute, sorry, that was the day I flung open the doors of perception.

**Ramona hot-glued big paper flowers**

She had for a long time

Onto her wide-brimmed white hat

By July the first flower dropped

The hat was whiter

An October wind took the last flower

In November the hat flew off

And rolled down the street

In a direction she wasn't going

Ramona went home

Or maybe she stopped Downtown for something to eat

I have no idea what she did

**I was in a complex of buildings all attached.**

It was dark, grimy, very old, and unused,

like a shell for evil activity.

It was empty.

It was even at peace in a way.

It houses the hidden.

You can visit it.

It's neither good nor bad, just ancient, industrial and grimy.

There are no windows, only rusted frames where windows were.

I reached up to one window and held my hand, fingers outstretched, into the space.

I was wearing a stained glass glove.

**Hey.**

**I just realized something.**

I'm 54...

I'll probably never have to work at a real job.

I ain't married (widowed) and never have to worry about meeting some chick's parents.

I have nothing to lose and nothing I need to gain.

You know exactly what I'm thinking, right?

Yeah, baby.

I can get a fucking tattoo on my face.

**I go walking about the world**

Loose dogs all around

Living free

I pet a few

Play with a few

Up the road I see my two dogs

Tied to short ropes

Standing outside their house

Watching me play with free dogs

I could set them free

Yes

I could

But then tell me, What am I going to go home to?

## **Two who argued**

About who was enlightened

And who was not

Each trying to top one statement

With another more sublime

Lie in a room

Separate beds

Very old

Not yet dead

But dying

And staring into space

Just staring into space

*Nisargadatta Maharaj said, "Now, for so long you have been watching, nourishing, protecting and guarding this personal 'I'. It is very dear to you. But, in truth, you are not this personal 'I'. It has nothing at all to do with you, and you know that in the end it will be gobbled up by time."*

*He said, "Remember who you are."*

**Okay, so I remember who I am.**

**But I forget Willie Mays**

running into center field with his back to the ball,  
making that effortless basket catch in 1952,

James Dean in a red shirt,

or the time I found a quarter and filled my pockets with  
candy bars.

uh huh.

I know who I am all the time, even during dreaming and  
sleep

I'm never surprised by who I am nor am I ever reminded

But for months I totally forget Jane Goodall.

Or how good Beverly Hills Cop was.

How about Joann, Fran, Mary, Francine, Venus, Gwen,  
Gwen, Geri, Linda, Suzanne, Karen, Darlene, Barb, Pam,  
Donna, Sylvia, Annie, Ann

or those little porcelain creamers they give you at The  
Apple Pan?

(if I've forgotten you, dear one from long ago, then that's  
exactly the point of this poem.)

yeah i remember who i am, okay?

but i forget Julian and Lake Cuyamaca.

I forget things to list in this poem.

I forget a pebble I once looked at, realizing, "You are the most important thing in existence."

I forget the drugstore on Park Ave., darkly lit like a nightclub.

I forget Rockin' Robin,

Jimmy Clanton,

and the kid on 17th Ave who said he had a rocket ship in his basement and it was an old time radio, a piece of furniture with a stupid white sheet over it and he got under the sheet and turned the dial to make weird whistling static sounds -- way ahead of his times with electronic music as it was the fifties.

I forget all kindza shit like that.

But I damn well remember who I am

Oh yeah.

I forget Len.

I forget Gilbert Rankin.

I forget Nicki Caruso.

I forget Bruce Friedman.

I forget Vandergriff.

But I always know who I am.

I know who I am so much that I don't even sleep and wake up.

I don't even check days off the calendar.

What days?

I remember who I am

But I forget Jane Goodall.

**you're in your room**

and you're totally okay  
maybe you're in bed  
a strange bed  
like a bed in a guest room  
in a house owned by people  
you don't really know  
something like that  
and here's this book sitting on the night stand  
and you're reading  
you're all alone  
miles from friends and loved ones  
you might be in a bed and breakfast  
and all's well  
you might hear crickets outside  
or frogs singing  
or it might be so quiet you hear nothing  
maybe you smell the bedding or the wood around you  
or the breeze  
and you suspect by now this book is going to tell you  
something about yourself  
but it doesn't tell you anything about yourself  
you sense it knows you  
and you see yourself in it  
you don't know what it is  
but you take it and take it and take it and absorb it

in the morning you look at the book on the little table  
you reach for it  
and try to find that place where it knows you

you find it and it's nothing more than a description  
of how a woman walks

you place this book on your chest  
and stare upward

it's as if you didn't sleep  
it's as if sleep is not the thing you do at night anymore

**I remember one day in the early 70's** going outside and seeing the sky filled with colorful hot air balloons. It was unexpected. I was living in Albuquerque and it was the first international hot air balloon festival.

If I were trying to describe the transcendental feeling of seeing all these balloons rising quietly and perfectly, I'd say it was like God taking back his tears.