

POETRY



BILLY DEAN

SOMEWHERE SAFE TO SEA

Billy Dean



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HELLO

Thank you for downloading my collection of poems. And since you did, it's probably safe to say that you like poetry. A poem, however, is like a glass of wine: bad if you don't like it, and good if you do. But there are more objective ways to define good and bad.

Bad poetry is merely a *container* for the *poet's* thoughts and feelings. Reading poems like that can make us feel as if we're listening to a child pounding the keys on a piano. The other side of that coin is a poem so clever and complex that we feel as if we're working a crossword puzzle without the clues. Bad poets don't *deliberately* craft poems to annoy or confuse you—they aren't thinking of you at all.

Good poetry is a *vehicle* for *your* thoughts and feelings. Reading poems like that can put us on a journey filled with adventure, humor, discovery, surprise, and suspense. Good poets *deliberately* craft poems that take you beyond *what* a poem means in a general, universal way so you can respond to *how* it affects you in a specific, personal way.

So I hope you find most or all of mine good rather than bad. As you read them, keep in mind that meter and line length are the music of poetry. Meter controls flow from syllable to syllable. Line breaks control flow from word to word. In structured poetry, rhyme ends a line. In free verse, lines can end *before* or *after* the meaning is complete.

The meaning of an enjambed line straddles two lines.

The meaning of end-stopped lines sit on one line.

Lines that are too long to fit on one line of your screen will wrap with an indent to let you know it's an end-stopped line. You can make this less likely to happen by rotating your Kindle from Portrait to Landscape.

**This is what you will see when an end-stopped line is too long
to fit on one line of your screen.**



ANGEL

Your birth day—
one of those precious moments
when the angels,
if there were any,
sang.

And if Simon had heard them,
he would have stood,
like Paula and Randy,
in awe,
speechless,
dancing to the rhythm of your mother
giving birth to one of them,
if there were any.

And if they had chosen to not exist,
you are yet one of them,
an angel,
mine.



BACKSEAT

You sit in the backseat,
a passenger in his rear-view mirror.

While you struggle
to regain your footing
on the steep, slippery slope
of his attention,
he, with his imagination,
buy tickets to the past,
back to your attractive youth
where he fondles his fading memory.

Silly, you think,
sitting in the backseat
of his rear-view mirror,
watching him watch you,
a balding old head
looking at where he's been
instead of where he could go—

knowing he's cheating on you,
the woman you are now,
with the woman you were.
As if a cook book,
even a good one,
could be better than a meal,
even an old one left in the fridge
too long.

While he disappears into yesterday,
You, with your forward eye,
buy a trip to tomorrow

where you will go
with alacrity,
alone.



BATTERIES INCLUDED

This poem works
right out of the box
and the batteries are included.

Well, some assembly is required:
You'll need a small hammer to break
the lines for pause, pace and punctuation
and to un-dangle words a line should not end with;

Patience, an ounce or two for the poet
and a drop or two to lubricate
things that should move but don't;

Wrenches, metrical and syntactic,
to tighten loose ends and fasten
parts that should not move but do;

Knives to cut fluff and other stuff
that doesn't amount to a hill of beans,
a pile of peas, or carry its own weight;

And metaphorical dexterity to grasp the meaning
and pry semantic openings between the lines.

Optional tools are a poet's head
to extrapolate from is to could be,
a poet's ear to hear the song,
and a poet's heart to love the music.

But it comes with a money-back guarantee,
operating instructions in seven languages,
an extended warranty, and,

during this month's special,
downloads are unconditionally free!



BEAM ME UP SCOTTY

Warping into outer space,
Beaming up and down.
Ambassadors to every race,
In Federation gown.

Energize, atomic core!
We're interstellar bound!
Our mission prime: ET found,
Where no one's gone before!

Klingons cloaking,
Kirk is joking,
Spock is telling time.
Galactic balls of acid dust,
Paradox, love and trust,
Weekly stellar crime.

But wait, Kirk fans,
I hear a voice!
It's faint, but coming through.
Scotty, beam me up, old chum,
I'm waiting here for you.

Aye, aye, Captain,
Up you'll come.
Will Spock be coming, too?

That friendly brogue in Scotty's voice
Could only come from earth!
No alien in that Scottish rogue —
A terra firma birth!

Sailing through the ports of time,
On woof and warp it flies.
Circling holes black as coal,
The good ship Enterprise.

Its mission my adventure,
My star bound friends its crew.
Each voyage I'm indentured —
This ship is my home, too!

If I were Captain of
The good ship Enterprise.
And alien ships were up above—
The sound of battle cries!

Scotty, beam us up! I'd yell,
Then turn to face my crew.
Aye, aye, Captain,
Give 'em hell!
We're waiting here for you.



COMMON GROUND

Everyday,
my feline friends and I
go outside to roll in dirt.

There on backs and butts,
that common ground receives
domestic fur and indoor skin.

Briefly,
we are one—
a tribal quorum of man and cats
joined in holy, rolling ritual.

Everyday,
this sacred moment comes,
then goes
to birds and words.



FIVE WAYS TO LEAVE A PARK

Children giggling and swings squeaking
in time with my heart—
up and down, back and forth

SKY

SKY

EARTH

I leave my seat at the top of its periodic arc
and disappear into the wonderful irregularity
of the clouds. The trees reach up
too late to stop my fall into the sky.

A single yellow rose turns in the breeze
to face the long rows of gardenias
in the next bed. I shake the dirt from my
parked and planted roots and cross over.

Leaves tempered in the long hot sun
flutter in a sudden gust of cold, dry wind.
I shiver and fall from the family tree,
then roll head over heels into the weeds
prospering at the edge of the road.

A flock of geese
honk their way over the horizon.
Their wings wave one last goodbye
to the season. I apply my feathers
to the wind and join them at the rear.

The low, dull drone of nearby traffic
calls me back to the world of you and me.



FOREVER

Turtles and trees and parrots and polyps
live longer than people.

But we mark our graves with stone,
not flesh and firewood or feathers and fish—
even rocks decompose.

And time is just a pendulum
marching for our gods Tick and Tock—
sentinels watching nature display her indifference.

Nor is love what forever is for.

For never is a long, long time—
longer than forever,
which is only now.

And I miss you even now—
while we are yet together.



LOVE IS

A prayer unplanned you fall into
as belief overcomes disbelief.

A wave you ride
to that sweet, safe shore
called home.

Patient, kind, other-seeking
and willing to change.

Not easily angered
nor mindful of wrongs done.

Tolerance and forgiveness
without end.

Discovering why you suffered
without it.

Friendship on fire.



MISS SKIBITSKI

I've forgotten the capitol of New York
and when the war of 1812 was fought.
But I remember Miss Skibitski.

Through thick glasses,
her cold, green eyes scanning the room,
her wrinkled hand erasing the board
or correcting our thin pants
with a thick ruler.

In her class,
chalk was the lesson for the day:
white tracks on a black board,
or whizzing at us like a fast ball.

I've forgotten
the questions she tossed at us
like screwballs or dead fish.
But I remember
the look in her bony finger
if my answer didn't reach
home plate.

Two times two
and three times nine
are once upon a time.

But I remember Miss Skibitski
multiplying her presence
during a sweaty test on arithmetic.

I don't remember how to spell

Miss's Sippy nor Afa's Ganastan.
But I remember every letter
of her attention when mine wandered off
to Peggy Sue.

The geography of Greece and Tennessee
are long ago and far away.
But I remember Miss Skibitski
rising to collect our papers,
her dress brushing the map
where the morning sun lit Australia.

The games we played are just a blur
with the years gone by.
But I remember those eagle eyes
in the back of her head
watching us recess from our books.

How she swore when I lied,
and the face she wore,
when I confessed, then cried.

And I remember the smile
dancing in her eyes
and the long, warm hug I got
the day I said my last goodbyes
to dear old Miss Skibitski.



MISTER LIGHTBUG

Please Mister Light Bug,
come inside today,
you know we'd never eat you,
we only want to play.

Come dance up on the wall
or skip across our rug.
Bounce on down the hall,
and feel our feline hug.

Hiding in the carpet?
Behind the louvered blind?
We're gonna be upset
if you we cannot find.

My little sister Callie
is looking high and low.
Now don't you dilly dally.
Come out and do your show.

Chase but never catch
is our promise true,
slipping through our paws
like you always do.

Hiding like the sun
in sad black clouds above?
Trade your gloom for kitty fun
in us you've found true love!

We're gonna take a break
(that chicken sure smells good)

but when we're done for heaven's sake,
be here like you should.

Now that breakfast's done,
you'll find it hard to hide:
I'm Cassie on the run!
I'm Callie by her side!

The crystal in my watch,
two sisters and the sun.
My heart is up a notch
with Mister Light Bug fun.



MY NEXT POEM

In this poem,
you've got savage beasts, smoke and fire,
stormy seas and sexy sailors.

But its alliteration is allusive,
its rhyme redundant,
its metaphors are mixed
and merely similes
and it shouts too loud with these... "!"

But my next poem
is a rocket to the moon!
A mighty arm against a sea of struggles!

My next poem won't just show you
claw-filled tracks in snow
or shadows sneaking by your tent.
In my next poem you come face to face
with the hairy, scary beast itself!
You'll hear its savage snarl!
Smell its rancid breath!
Feel its fangs filet your flesh!

In this poem your campfire glows
warm and friendly against the night,
its smoke drifting drowsily
through the pines.

Wake up!
My next poem sets YOU on fire!
You ARE the firewood popping,
burning bright!

This poem?

Just a lazy line floating on a lake—
slack and lifeless as a worm.

My next poem? Peligro!

YOU are on the hook when the pole jumps,
the line ZZZings.

Fins with eyes rise to nibble, bite—
take you to the bottom for the night!

In this poem

you are cruising the Caribbean
sipping cappuccino solitaire
without a care.

Dude!

You are not on a cruise ship
in my next poem!

You are in a storm at the helm
of a puny little boat.

Your knuckles turn white,
your skin blue,
every wave crashing down on you
fills your eyes with fear,
your mouth with salt.

You lose sight of the shore
for a long, long time in my next poem
and ache for... wait!

Can you hear the Sirens of Odysseus?
their lovely voices calling you like a
soft, seductive breeze?

Do you feel those nymphs embracing you?
Exotic and delicious in your hungry arms?
Taste their lips sweetly kissing yours?
Teasing, pleasing all your thirsty dreams?

Of course not!
Take the wax out of your ears!
Untie yourself from the mast!
All that dangerous, sensual stuff is in
my next poem
when you'll sing to the stars,
dance in the rain
and sail home with tall tales
and foreign spices.



NIGHT BLOOMS

I am tired of solitary roses.
Pure red and perfect,
long stemmed and lovely,
cutoff at the ankles and dressed up for sale,
then brought home for love,
but left standing in a fashioned vase
on a domesticated table.

Where are the bouquets?
Those wild, dappled darlings,
feet in the earth,
face on the sun,
smiles popping up everywhere
for nothing.

But I also grow weary
of petals open to the sun
but closed to the moon.
Horny little beggars waiting for
buzzing bees and butterfly kisses.

Where are those night-blooming daturas
smiling in the moonlight?
Virgin white bells waiting for chirping chiroptera,
leather-tight wings and velvet tongues
chasing echoes in the night.



ONLY SHE KNOWS

When I was a boy,
God was a bearded old man—
an unapproachable Father
who came down from the mountain
with a long list of naughty and nice.

In my prodigal youth,
God was a lawless young man—
a coming-of-age Adventurer
who chose self over service,
growing up over buckling down.

When I grew up,
God became a long-legged Goddess,
breathlessly beautiful and mellifluously mine
on moon-lit nights.

After the war,
God was a grim Reaper
bleeding my world of art, leaves and common sense.

Now,
with the years piled up like pages in a book,
one on top of the other,
God is a Mother
birthing and nursing our times together
and apart.

Only She knows,
when it's time to say goodbye,
what severance we will suffer,
what separation we must endure.



OUR LAST BREATH

You were my blue-eyed bandit—
a mask on your face and theft in your tail.

You stole my heart every time you ran away
with that bright yellow ribbon streaming behind you.

Your prancing and purring
were a playing field for our enthusiasms,
a foundation now crumbling beneath me,
an amputee feeling the phantom limb
that was you.

Nobody should die alone.

You didn't. We were together
'til the last beat of your heart,
your last breath,
me holding you,
me holding mine.

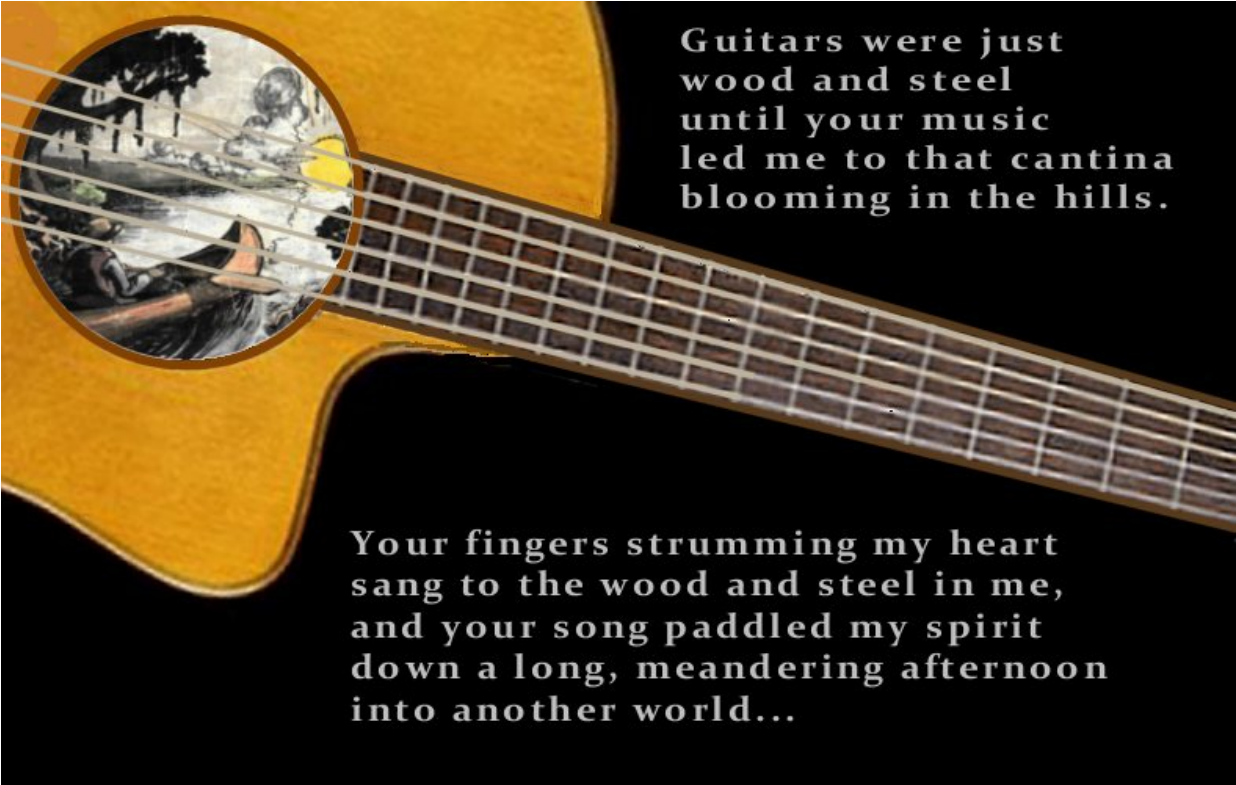
My world was filled with a cold silence
when you left.

Then warmed by the peace that came from remembering
that you and I were small in the scope and scheme of things
yet large in life and love—

that friends as beautiful and precious as you
are saved where you have always lived:
in my heart 'til its last beat,
my last breath—



ROMAN STRINGS



Guitars were just
wood and steel
until your music
led me to that cantina
blooming in the hills.

Your fingers strumming my heart
sang to the wood and steel in me,
and your song paddled my spirit
down a long, meandering afternoon
into another world...



SAVED

The bed was empty this morning —
even with me and the cats in the covers.
You weren't in the kitchen, either,
brewing coffee or cooking breakfast.

No, I didn't find you there.
And you weren't in the garden
tending your flowers.
I told them you were gone,
but they just kept on smiling,
like idiots.

I looked everywhere but nowhere,
then fed your hummingbirds—
watched them zip, hover and zoom,
work the feeders, and fight for territory.

Wish I could fly away with you,
right now, this morning
but my heart is too heavy,
my wings too broken.

We were soul mates!
How could you be finished with me
before I was done with you?

Whose eyes will see you smile?
Whose hands will rub your cold feet?
Whose fingers will brush your hair?
Soft, long—the color of peaches in Spring.
I can still smell it.

The Cosmos saves everything by changing it.
You changed in a heart break,
a change so sudden and complete
my breath ran away.

It may never return,
but I too, am saved,
for you changed me.



SILENT SEAL

This kiss my lips to yours—
a wordless "I love you."
Whispered up a bit more close
than I usually do.

Spoken not from mouth to ear,
this silent touch a seal,
but lips to lips confessed to you,
an oath that you can feel.

May it match the ones you know
in your pleasant dreams.
And may you plumb the deepest depths
of what it simply means.

On open heart and just closed eyes,
now let this kiss write true.
Well cross my T's and dot my I's,
I'm still in love with you!



SOMETHING ELSE

We are children of the skin—
open to pollen and pleasure
but not the sting.

Terrified of things
not one thing or another:
dreams, deep water,
silence, long journeys
and crossroads.

Our secondary organ,
that gray, causal iceberg
of rules and reason—
Aristotle's seat of sense and intellect.

How it struggles to clear the woods
of weeds and yesterday,
to fasten every answer with a nail,
make things noon or midnight,
dusk or dawn.

But nature is more skilled with numbers
than Newton.

More randomly clever with variation
than Darwin.

More like dice than design.

More like rain drops falling on a boulder
than levers fashioned in a factory.

More like a spider poised on silken strands
tuned to every tug,
the slightest struggle of a fly.

More like a forest of questions
than a library of answers
or a shrine filled with decrees.

More like shadows waiting to
flesh out and feather up—
become something else
not one thing or another.



SOMEWHERE SAFE TO SEA

I came out here to be alone
to speak to the stars and trees
to holler a thing or two at the moon
to chat with the great outdoors.

Armed with a flashlight
I trace the Big Dipper
watch stars pour into the Milky Way
and hear an owl ask “Who? Who?”—
a question always out of reach.

Overhead
Orion shakes his sword
at Sirius and Procyon.
Their barking disturbs Scorpio
who sweeps its tail across the horizon.

The evergreens silhouetted
around this ancient lake
stand up to protest Cancer
wave goodbye to the Daystar
and supervise ripples marching to shore.

Armed with legs
I peel a zillion minutes from an hour
boil a month of Sundays from the week.
Underfoot, the moon-blached leaves
who fell from the family tree last week
crackle and complain.

My flashlight catches a stream
escaping the lake

sneaking through the wild flowers
racing with the moon.

Here in the dark
watching water slide over silver stones
I know sooner or later
everything wanders slowly
somewhere safe to sea.



THAT OTHER COLOR

I stood alone
watching her drive away
with Jim,

my best friend,

in that truck we painted
three summers ago—

the one Jim's dad gave me
to fix for him
when we were 15.

She'll never know
how much I love
that truck —
the rust bleeding through
its other color.



THE TROUBLE WITH TIME

Without her
everything would happen at once.

But she's a liar:
some of the stars she shows us
from down here
aren't up there
anymore.

Synchronicity?
Her tallest tale.

She makes you late for work
me a dollar short
and makes both of us remember yesterday
not tomorrow.

She walks in rain
runs through flowers
crawls through molasses in January
and waits for no one.
Then stands breathlessly still
in a broken heart.

Her heart beats in clocks forever
but she gives us only now
hides tomorrow in a crystal ball
sends yesterday
even the moment before this one
on a trip to once upon a time
in a land far away.

We never get enough of her.
Then she disappears down two iron rails
converging on eternity.



THIS LADY IS A MOON

The stars put on the same old
twinkle, twinkle every night.
But she removes her velvet wrap
curve by curve,
then stands in the cold spotlight alone—
still, iridescent and nude.

Owls ask “Who? Who? Who are you?”
Wolves and lovers beg to see.
She winks at them
but shows her private side
to only me.

She sends me love notes, too—
not in tossed bottles
but riding waves kissing sand.
I read her ebb and flow in the tide
lapping code upon the shore.

She followed me home last night
quietly as smoke drifting through the trees—
her soft cheeks cratered with scars
where critics had tossed
hard things at her.

To light my way?
Tease my dreams?
Who can tell?
But I liked walking
wrapped beguilingly in
her big-eyed glow.



TIGER ON THE SCREEN

No taller than a toad
it squats on a pad floating in a virtual pond
of paper and pixels—
quiet as a mouse
bat blind
and bald as the back of a hand.

But this mouse is a tiger on the screen.
It patrols its flat, monitored territory
swishing its tail and clicking its buttons.

To move a character upstage or down
or to end your part
it moves in
inserts its point
drags you by the cursor
to a bottomless bin
then closes the window.



TOMORROW'S NEWSPAPER

Your fire-fly eyes captured mine
like a deer in headlamps,
freeze-framed and wide-eyed.

One breathless blink and I was yours.

Today it's your smile
that brings the sun up in me.

Today it's your sweet, mellifluous voice
that speaks to my heart,
excites my imagination,
and breathes surprise into every day.

Today is like finding tomorrow's newspaper
in a park on a bench—
the weather not reported yet
but sunny skies in the forecast
for you and me.



TONIGHT

Tonight—
we will capture fire
and conquer flame,
poke spears at glowing coals
and watch darkness
run away from us.

Tonight—
under a moon ripe with time
and blanched by fire
we will gather fruit
to paint our bodies
with juice from berries.

Tonight—
we will sing stories,
dance songs and hear silence
speak louder than words.

Tonight—
under stars that wander
and make us wonder,
we will look up and dream
that hunters just like you and me
are sitting round a captured fire,
a star-lit sky,
looking down at us.



TOO MUCH

I drove out here from the city
thinking I'd get back to nature
and write poetry—
knowing it's to find you in a world
that doesn't need words
to be.

But you are too much with me.

As is our guide through this desert,
reducing its wonder to words,
building semantic cages for rats who hop
like kangaroos,
sabotaging my belief that lizards can sleep
with blue-bellied dreams.

Her iambic plates and volcanic irony?
Just clever ways to explain
the forces that caused these boulders
to shoulder their way to the surface
a zillion yesterdays ago.

But she couldn't hide the suffering
that pushed you into the sky
to tower over me today.

Without her,
I'd hear the desert trumpet
calling her wasp home for the night,
and see those Sotol-green swords
cutting the air with silence

Without her, I'd solve the puzzled look
on these lichen-covered stones,
and this breeze would tell me where it's going
and why the buckwheat
are nodding their red-haired heads
in the wake of its breath.

Without you,
Autumn would reveal how she hides her gold
in Summer green. These pinion would sing
with the bright blue voice of the jay.
And this old juniper would tell me why
she stands alone with only her needles
to face a hot sun, an empty sky,
a cold, dry wind.

My eyes are hungry
for those hawks circling overhead.
My skin yearns to touch
that wild grass dancing at my feet.
And my heart aches to smile
like these sun-yellowed poppies.

But you are still too much with me
and I am still too much without you.

I drove out here to meet the yucca and its moth,
to shake hands with the cactus who jumps,
to hear with my eyes and see a sound,
to taste a touch and feel a scent—

to find you in a world
that doesn't need words to be.

You loved words and the world
but could not stay
and mine won't keep you.



TOTAL RECALL

Do you recall those walks along the shore?
The water oozing through our toes?
The sea embracing sand?
Our naked eyes swimming in the stars?

Footprints, you said,
are proof we're really here.
I recall retracing yours with mine.

Do you recall that solitary beach at dawn?
Our bare foot dancing in the dunes?
Those morning kisses pulling up the Sun?

You said my breath
rose and fell like the tide.
I recall my heart standing still.

Do you recall our breathless run
Up that sandy hill? Our happy dash
into the breakfast-crowded Inn?

You said you won, of course.
I recall a bill to choke a horse!

Do you recall those talks beside the pool?
Those young and carefree promises?
Our gallop through the pines?

You said that we'd be sore tomorrow.
I recall we weren't at all.

Do you recall the cozy evenings by the fire?

Glasses filled with brandy to the brim?

You said good brandy can burn the eyes
but warm the heart.

I recall my eyes full,
my heart on fire with you.

Do you recall the day we packed our bags?

Drove the road from then to now?

How it didn't seem so long ago at all?

Yesterday, you said, has come to pass
and I recall it all.



WILD & RADICAL

Weeds—
I love 'em.

Outsiders like me:
wild and radical to the root.

Weeds are not sown—
they blow in the wind
bloom out of season
and break the laws
of cultivated soil.

Weeds are not pruned, groomed,
nor kept alive in glass vases .

Weeds are dug up
cast out and carried away
in the shoveled jaws of civil birds
then deposited in scat
and left for dead.

But weeds don't die.

Weeds reincarnate
outside the field of farm and fence,
home again on feral ground.



WOODEN BONES

This one stares at me with empty eyes—
buzzards shattered its cornea and
invaded its cranium long ago.

Its wooden bones lean against
the angry wind.

Its asbestos skin,
blistered in the hot sun,
peels in the moonlight
slipping through the broken rafters.

Memories linger
in this home for rats and rabbits.

Who surrendered it to weeds and webs?

Who left it rotting in the sand?

Scorpions high-tail for cover
as my flashlight searches
shadowed ruins and
deserted dreams.



WOODEN SOLDIERS

In your hand,
they seal fates, secure fortunes
and launch ships—
tongue sharp and sword mighty.

In mine,
nothing they do is permanent,
and most is rubbed away—
fit only for notes and lists,
a doodle, a drawing,
a scribble, a sketch.

In your fingers,
they spin and dance—
ballerinas twirling on their toes.

In mine,
they stomp and stumble—
clowns wobbling on their heels.

For you,
they are tools of craft and precision:
slender, straight and tall,
young, six-sided and cedar fresh,
eager to empty their black hearts
on painfully white fields,
and sacrifice themselves without regret
to crumpled sheets and polished gems.

For me,
they are merely soldiers in
yellow uniforms and pink helmets

armed with lead and ready to march
but doomed to die
on paper beds.



YOUR DADDY'S BUGGY

Men with guns slung across their horses' necks
ride up and down across the line.
You hold two bug-eyed horses straining at the reins
on your daddy's buggy.

Where could he be? you ask,
with a worried look over your shoulder
through tears and eyes
only eight years from birth
into a world eight seconds from—

Bang!
Oh god, we're off!
But daddy's not!
Where could he—

Head over heels goes the man to your right,
out of sight under his horse,
hooves clawing crazily at hard red earth,
hitting your plain gray skirt with dirt.

Voices screaming,
nostrils flaring,
your daddy's buggy bashing rocks
you should have missed
and too much dust.

Gritting teeth, bulging veins,
blistered hands
holding weathered reins
with all your might to fight
two horses for your daddy's buggy.

With reins flopping in your face
and hands between your knees to brace
against a fall you pray that—

Okay? you hear a horseman holler.
You nod while he rides off and you sit down
butt sore, gut tired, and soul weary.

Yes, you'll be okay.
You'll go back and find your Daddy
in his buggy.



YOUR HAND

Poker ain't my game.

Yeah,
I know when to hold 'em or fold 'em.
And if you call my hand,
I'll lay 'em down—
all of 'em.

But playing my cards against yours?
Betting I'll draw another queen?
Bluffing you into finishing a flush
or filling a straight?

No,
canasta is more suited for me—
playing my cards into yours
and yours into mine.
Melding two hands into one.

Like yesterday,
when you laid your cards on the table.
Lucky my heart played straight into
your hand.



YOUR NAME

This white hair and Choctaw chin
don't make me a chip off the old block.
But I could have used a piece of you
when the chips were down
and I was out of aces.

You cloned and collared me
to place your bets
and play your hand.

But I've got my own cards now
and they won't be
fuel for your feeble fire,
wind for your weary wings,
nor saddled to carry you one more step
down that long, dark tunnel.

Your name might have fit like an old shoe,
but you stuffed a sock in my soup,
then served the cookbook as the meal.

The last time you closed that heavy door,
turned out your light,
one of the lights in me went out
but another light came on.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Thank you for reading my poetry. You can find the other books I've published and make comments about this one on my [Author Page](#) at Amazon.



If you choose to give me feedback on clarity, flow, pacing, imagery, breath, meter, rhyme and reason, please consider the following criteria as a place to begin.

Sight—do your *eyes* like it? Like rivers, which are made more exciting by the canyons that direct their flow, poems are made more enticing by the line breaks that control their flow.

Sound—do your *ears* like it? Poems fail when they stray too far from the song. Songs fail when they stray too far from the dance.

Sense—does your *head* like it? The difference between an almost right word and the right word is the difference between a lightning bug and lightning.

Spirit—does your *heart* like it? Words go together in zillions of ways. Some ways go shallow and some ways go deep.

