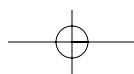
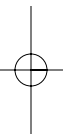
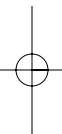
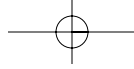


*Putting Our Heads Together*

I was crawling out  
of Lewis Carroll's keyhole  
with all the  
necessary knowledge  
to save the world  
  
and crashed head-on into  
Alice in Wonderland.  
On her way back in,  
ready to contradict  
everything I had to say.





*page 22*

*Poetry Floats*

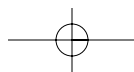
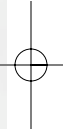
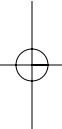
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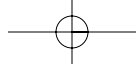
*GPS*

I prefer  
silence and space  
to  
people and place.

So  
sometimes  
it looks like  
I am leaving  
when  
I am really  
coming home.

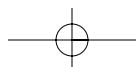
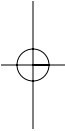
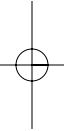
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*Seeing the Lite  
(philosophically)*

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*Braveheart the Crawfish*

George Armstrong Custer was a pompous idiot.  
Braveheart the Crawfish is not.  
Fighting the red mud water, he treads against  
the mass motion of molecules  
across the middle of the road.  
He is assigned by nature both inside and out  
to defend his puddle  
sent roaring across County Road 127  
by this August deluge.

So as my two-thousand pound Pontiac approaches,  
in spite of the waters surging over him,  
he rears on his hind legs to his full four inches.  
The current whips around his knees,  
Upraised forelegs and antenna  
give him fifty percent more presence.

Though a comrade lies two feet away  
a puddle of crawfish puree—  
never once does he question  
whether his territory  
is worth defending.

I drive around him  
because it is his territory—  
as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse  
drowned Custer in his own blood  
for violating this same rule.

### *Good to the Last Drop*

Apparently draining the last dribble  
from the squeezable  
plastic Head & Shoulders shampoo bottle,  
a sporadic blue snake spit-sputter-spats  
into a paltry palm puddle.  
Hammering a ten-second pounding  
yields palm pain and one more drop.

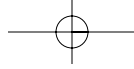
Then I snap shut the lid.  
Turn the bottle upside down  
and perch it in a headstand  
on the bathtub edge.

During the day,  
clinging shampoo residue looses its grip  
and oozes down into the cap.  
For two more mornings  
shampoo magically appears that  
refused to participate the day before.

This effort  
works with Afta pre-electric shave  
and Equate moisturizing lotion, too,  
making me wonder—

How many extra days of other things  
could I have gained  
by being slightly innovative  
and trying a little harder?

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## *Relativity*

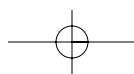
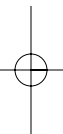
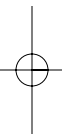
On a heavenly morning  
I sit on the right side of the plane  
and my pilot is instructed  
to rise toward the south.

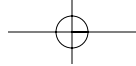
Nose pressing my window  
I see  
that I am flying on two planes.

On a parallel course  
a shadow plane of shadow passengers  
zips along hugging the ground below.

As I fly into a cloudbank  
the silhouette plane,  
unable to escape shadow gravity,  
disappears — and one "I am" is lost.

I am relatively unaware of my death  
save a brief flash of chest pain  
until I read tomorrow's newspaper.



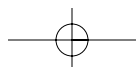
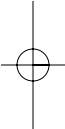
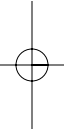


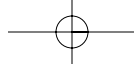
*Realizing I Am the Endangered Species*

Perched atop my desk and  
trapped behind a glass  
framed with black metal bars,  
a cold staring, bald eagle  
issues  
this stern warning.

FOCUS  
if you chase two rabbits  
both  
will escape.

So today I focus  
and suddenly realize  
that this bird's words,  
heard for years as promise,  
do not necessarily guarantee  
even that one rabbit I so  
righteously assumed.



*Scandal*

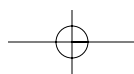
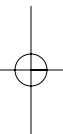
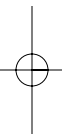
If you are called  
before a congressional committee  
to answer the question—  
Have you stopped beating your wife?

Figure that you are part of an elite group  
that includes  
Vietnam policy advisors of the '60s  
and Confederate heroes.

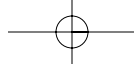
It is best to move  
to the back of the bus  
and start  
your own witness protection program

by setting up photo opportunities  
of you visiting nursing homes  
and delivering meals on wheels  
as soon and as often as possible.

But please do not  
try to start a hedge fund  
or publicly kiss  
babies of any age.





*See Outside – Peace Inside*

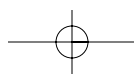
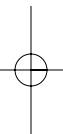
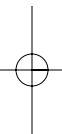
Twilight falls.  
Bullfrog croaks to hooting owl—  
“Meet me at eight  
on the isle of imagination.”  
I’ll be there too — singing.

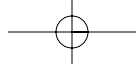
As Mr. Moon  
rises to the occasion,  
we chorus nature’s night song,  
the wondrous harmony  
of our varied nocturnal solos.

The four of us  
and all the universal spirits  
gather—  
kicking back to watch  
as twinkling stars begin  
turning on their night-lights.

Sweeping their stardust  
down across light years,  
sprinkling our peering porches,  
paving a path for peace to our souls.

---





*Reflection – noitcelfeR*

Unicolor gray skies drip  
through the clasping oaken cover.

Beneath the trees raindrops float  
to shallow earth depression.

Eastern shore laps the sidewalk.  
Sea-less seawall guards front door.

Far shore feathers into sands  
meets the rolling green grass lawn.

I glance down into the pool  
seeing up into the sky—

Infinitely in both directions  
the thickness of a pond reflection.

